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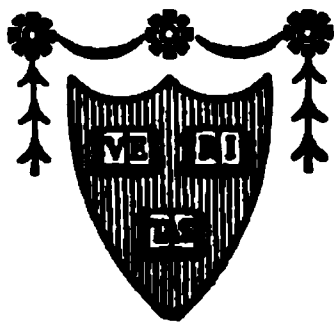
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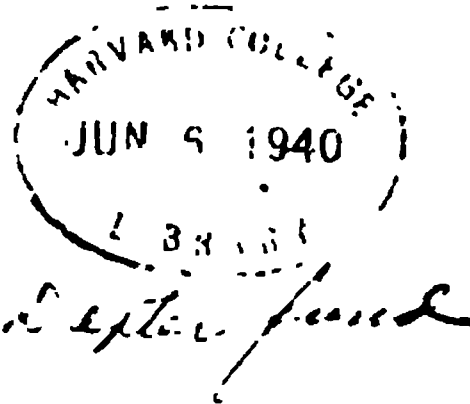
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MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1901.

PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XXIII.

POLLY may have been a clever woman, as Mr. James Brownlow had said she was, but in his catalogue of her abilities he omitted to mention her one great gift, her undeniable talent for getting things. She was a true collector and picker-up of trifles; she had brought this too little appreciated art to a rare perfection, and she never went anywhere without acquiring something, never came home completely empty-handed, never declined or passed by a single article or opportunity however trivial or cumbersome. Her motto was *It might be useful*. "If she went to the Sahara," Bill said, "she would bring home sand for the chickens' run." But besides the collector's art Polly possessed the true genius for getting, not begging nor demanding, but annexing calmly as by right divine, or acquiring gracefully as bestowing a favour in accepting one. "I don't ask for things," she used to say; "people always offer them to me. I am sure I don't know how it is, but they do, and it looks so rude to refuse."

So she never refused, and seldom went anywhere or met anyone without directly or indirectly turning the occasion to profit. Bymouth did not promise a very likely field for her abilities, but even here she found and seized an opportunity. It was

late in the visit certainly, not till after their fellow-lodgers had gone. This took place on Tuesday, the day on which Bill told Kit Harborough of the claim.

The drawing-room family left at one o'clock, the cousins watching them go. They drove to Bybridge in a small wagonette, and it was interesting to see them getting into it, for the family was large, far too large for the wagonette.

"They will never do it," Bella said as she watched them.

"After the way in which they packed into that bedroom," Polly remarked severely, "I should say they could go anywhere or anyhow."

"They had two bedrooms," Bill said; "there was another up the yard."

"I call it positively indecent," was Polly's opinion, but Bill asked: "Where is the indecency? The girls were in one and the boys in the other. Mrs. looked after the girls and Mr. after the boys; they had more space apiece than we three have, and I am sure we are all right."

Polly explained that their own arrangement was quite different and much better, but Bill, who had now joined Bella at the window, did not pay any attention to her.

"Oh, do come and look, Polly," she said; "they have nearly done it. They would do it easily if it were not

for the luggage; they ought to have a cart for that."

"They are far too stingy," Polly observed contemptuously.

"The mother will nurse the baby," Bill went on, "and the father the next-sized one, and the little girl that big bundle. They have left one box out."

"Where will they put it?" Bella said.

"They can't get it in front," was Bill's opinion; "the coachman can hardly see round the rampart of luggage as it is. They are going to try though. If they would put it inside it could be managed. There it goes! I knew it would fall off the front! If you were to put it—"

"Come in, Bill!" Polly seized Bill's arm. "Come in at once! It is no business of yours; let people manage their own concerns. I am ashamed of you!"

But Bill was not ashamed of herself; she was far too much absorbed in the difficulties of the family to care for Polly, and when someone in the wagonette below having heard her voice called up to know what she had said, she leaned out of the window again and told them. "Put it inside; I believe you could do it then,—not that way, small end down. You don't mind me suggesting it, do you? It would have been such a pity" ("Bill!") "if you couldn't all get in. That's right; now" ("Bill! Shut that window, Bella.") "if the two little boys sit on it and the biggest one stands on the step—that's splendid!"

"Shut that window, Bella!"

Bella shut the window almost on to Bill's neck, leaving her no choice but to draw her head in. The family, who did not appear to resent her interference, shouted their thanks to where she had been, while Bella, who had been as much annoyed as Polly

by Bill's behaviour, joined the elder cousin in telling the culprit so.

But Bill did not mind much. "It would have been such a pity if they had not managed it," she said, "and I don't believe they could any other way."

"It was no affair of yours," Bella said; "I don't see why you wanted to make such an exhibition of yourself. There were people passing too, one of those shooting men from the River House had just come out of the post-office; he did stare at you, and no wonder!"

Bill said she did not care, which was true; but she did not know that the man described the incident, inclusive of her and her directions, in Kit Harborough's hearing that evening. Kit recognised her from the description, as Gilchrist had done when his lawyer-friend Ferguson described her, and Kit, like Gilchrist, did not betray her identity. He said even less about her than did Gilchrist, though he experienced a youthful desire to knock the informant down when he announced an intention of finding out who the girl was. But the pugilistic wish was restrained, Kit reflecting that, as Bill was leaving the day after to-morrow, it was most unlikely the fellow would find out anything about her; and, after all, that he should wish to do so was, in Kit's opinion, quite natural and only what was to be expected. It was also, in the same opinion, quite natural that Bill should assist the family in the wagonette with her advice, quite natural and quite right; indeed, so right that Kit never questioned its propriety at all, possibly because she did it; though in his defence it must be said that he troubled less about the correctness of an action than did Gilchrist, thinking not at all of "how it looked." He had been brought up among people who, being quite sure

of themselves and their public, never troubled their heads about how a thing might look.

Polly had not been so brought up, and, conscious that her actions would not always bear investigation, she was most anxious that appearances should, when possible, be beyond reproach. She lectured Bill proportionately, and was, as usual, listened to with indifference; but when at last Polly brought her remarks to a close with, "It was like everything else you do, most unladylike," Bill said rather wistfully: "I suppose I am unladylike, Polly?"

"Hopelessly," was the crushing answer.

"I should like to be better," the voice was a shade more wistful; "I would try if I knew what to do."

"Don't lean out of the window to give advice to strangers," Polly said, and Bill making no reply, she began to perceive that her young cousin was in an unusually pliant mood. Seeing this she seized the opportunity, the first that had offered, of speaking to her about her behaviour to Gilchrist. As a preliminary she heaved a deep sigh, and, after a quick glance at the girl, began with chastened mildness.

"After all," she said, "to lean out of the window like that is only a small thing, but it is an illustration of your ways. Your ways often trouble me, Bill, do you know that? Sometimes I feel as if I shall give you up entirely, and then again sometimes I think you really are ignorant and would try to do better if you only knew how your behaviour looked."

Bill twisted restively, Polly's voice having taken on the melancholy semi-nasal drawl which belonged to her part of the grieved guardian. Bill did not believe in her at any time, and that afternoon the manner irritated instead of amusing. But she was sincerely convinced of her own shortcomings, and though she had no great

opinion of Polly, there was no one else to whom she could go; so she said: "Tell me what I do wrong; you need not put in all that about being sorry and the rest; I know how that goes, and can fill it in for myself."

"Thank you, Bill," Polly said with dignity; but quickly seeing the girl's attitude of mind and the precariousness of her own opportunity, she shortened her part and, after a brief remark on her cousin's impoliteness and her own forbearance, got to business without further delay.

"You want to know where I think you wrong? I will tell you one or two things,"—she spoke as one who has a wide range of examples from which to choose. "There is your behaviour to Gilchrist to begin with; you do not behave at all nicely to him."

"To Theo!" Bill exclaimed in astonishment, "to him! What do I do wrong to him?"

"You call him Theo for one thing; he objects to it and it is ridiculous; all nicknames are ridiculous."

"All?"

"Yes, all; and abbreviations of names are almost as bad,—I don't see why you should not be called *Wilhelmina* instead of *Bill*. It does not suit you, it is true, but I am sure he would prefer it, besides *Bill* is vulgar; don't you think so yourself?"

"He can call me *Wilhelmina* if he likes," Bill said in a subdued voice. "And as for *Theo*, that is easily altered; he can be *Gilchrist* if he wishes it, though I think it is quite as unsuitable for him as *Wilhelmina* for me."

"My dear Bill,"—Polly was delighted to have made so much impression—"it is not a question of what you think but of what he wishes. You ought to consider his wishes; you ought to try to please him and consult his tastes; remember, he is proposing to give you a great deal,

were going to be compelled to recognise him and his wife,—his wife who would have to reform and perhaps forget.

"No," she said suddenly, almost passionately; "I will never forget you, Polly, never look down on you, never, no matter where I am, nor what I become. If I lived in a palace you should come and stay with me; if I married a king he should receive you and take you in to dinner, and all the silly courtiers should bow down to you because you were mine. You are an old fraud, Polly, and a cadger, and a bit of a humbug too, but I am fond of you all the same. We are not swells, you and I, but we will stand by each other, and I will never, never forget!"

"That is a very nice spirit," Polly said impressively and very much through her nose.

"Do you think I would forget?" Bella asked rather hurt. "You seem to think I am a horrid creature."

"No, we don't," Bill answered her, "of course we don't; we know really that you never would be ashamed of your grubby relations. Don't let us talk any more nonsense about it."

So peace was restored, and Polly began cutting slices off the cold shoulder of mutton while the younger girls finished their lunch.

"If you married a king," Bella said to Bill laughing, "he might object to Polly walking up to the palace with a nose-bag of apples sticking out of the middle of her mackintosh."

"Not if he had married me; he would have got used to that sort of thing."

Bella laughed again. "It is a good thing your Theo is not very particular about appearances."

"You don't know very much about Theo," Bill answered quietly.

"I know this much," Bella re-

plied; "he will not let you do just as you like if it happens to be something he does not like and has good reason to think wrong."

"There may be difficulties," Bill admitted with the glimmer of a smile, her war-smile which Polly knew to her cost.

"Bill is very easy to manage when you understand her," that lady said as she sharpened her knife. "Gilchrist will find out how to do it in time; at least he may."

She added the last words under her breath, neither of the others hearing her, for Bella was asking in astonishment: "You would never really oppose a man you loved, would you, Bill?"

Bill debated the question for a moment looking straight before her. "No," she said at last, "I suppose I should not." Then she changed the subject abruptly: "What is that meat for, Polly?"

"To take home with us. I am not going to leave all that good meat behind; there is quite enough now on the bone to look decent, and it would be a great pity to leave all this."

Bella did not approve of this proceeding, but Polly, untroubled by her objections, packed the meat up. "There," she said, giving the parcel a final pat, "it will come in very nicely for our supper when we get home, and I am sure there is quite a lot on the joint still."

Bill examined it gravely. "There is enough for our cat here," she said; "it seems a pity to leave that. Let's take it; we haven't time to scrape it off, but you might put the bone in your hat-box; it would go in if I broke it in half."

"Don't be ridiculous, Bill," Polly said with dignity, "ridiculous and mean. I don't see anything to laugh at, Bella."

Apparently Bella did, but Polly never minded being laughed at, and it was in a friendly fashion that the three cousins started for home. In the main the three agreed admirably; Bella seldom opposed Polly, and Bill, since she had developed an opposing individuality, had been little with them; moreover, she was of a nature with which it was not easy to quarrel. Polly, however, having a respect for her ability to give trouble on occasions, sent her back to Theresa at Ashelton two days after their return to Wrugglesby. "I have got a lot of things to settle," she explained to Bella, "and I can do them better without her."

CHAPTER XXIV.

So Bill was packed off to Ashelton, and then Polly proceeded to settle things to her own complete satisfaction. She saw the house in Bayswater and settled that; she saw the parents of the few pupils remaining to her and settled them very completely; and then she wound up her connection with Wrugglesby with but few difficulties and not a single regret.

"Well, I cannot say I ever cared for it," she said when Bella expressed some natural sorrow at leaving the town which had been her home for nearly seven years. "I never was fitted for a pokey little place like this; I need a wider life."

"It may be pokey," Bella declared with tears in her eyes, "but I like it, and I am sorry to leave it, and to leave the shabby old house and the shabby old furniture."

"We are not leaving the furniture," Polly said quickly. "We are taking all we want with us, and only selling what is of no use to any of us. You and Theresa have each

chosen what you wanted; one can't keep all the rubbish."

The last was added very decidedly, for there had been some discussion about the furniture. Bella had fallen in quietly enough with Polly's judicious arrangements, but Bill, who cherished ridiculous sentiments about old and cumbersome articles of furniture, had disputed Polly's decision article by article, winning sometimes, losing sometimes, and only desisting when it was obvious that the little house at Bayswater could hold no more. All this had taken place during the visits she and Theresa occasionally paid the cousins at Wrugglesby during the time of the settlement. It was all over now, arranged finally some days ago; Polly was only afraid of reopening the question. The three were assembled for the last time at Langford House, Robert having driven Bill to Wrugglesby that afternoon to see the last of the old place and the old associations. There was nothing at all to be done, it was really nonsense for her to come, Polly said, and was not at all surprised that Bill did not arrive till almost dark.

Robert had been delayed in starting, and when Wrugglesby was reached Bill would not be driven to the house, but got down from the dog-cart at the stables and walked, with something clinking forgotten in her pocket, down the familiar streets, saying a silent good-bye. It was a grey, gusty afternoon, the first of October. There were dead leaves in the quiet corners,—all the corners were quiet here—and the wind came now and then whirling them about her feet. It was a good wind, fresh and sweet for all its strength, and the girl felt she loved it; it was the home-wind to her, the wind of the Eastern Counties. And the greyness and the peace and the great sense

of space and abundant room were home to her, the land of the Eastern Counties, not grand at all, but still and wide, and very, very dear.

She stood a moment on the outskirts of the little town looking across the well remembered country. Then she turned and walked home through the small, ill-paved streets, past the familiar shops,—those with the new fronts, those with the old many-paned windows; past the police-station, the Georgian house with the legend *County Police* set over the door; past the church with its ancient burying-ground where, five steps above the town, Aunt Isabel slept under the dark green grass and fluttering sycamore leaves; past genteel houses with small gardens where sunflowers lingered with hollyhocks and dahlias still unhurt by frost; past each familiar thing until at last, just as the lamps in the town were being lighted, Langford House was reached.

But the cousins who received her knew nothing of Bill's lonely walk, nor yet of the something which clinked in her pocket. Indeed, she herself did not think of the last immediately; she did not think of it until after Bella had made the remark on her regret at leaving Wrugglesby. Bill did not speak of her regret, and as for Polly, she had none of which to speak. "As we have got to go some time," she said, "it may as well be now as later; better in fact, for though the lease is not up till Christmas, we could not expect to get such another chance of a house as the one now offered."

To which wisdom Bella assented; after all, leaving the house now did not concern her so very much, for in any circumstances she would have had to leave before the spring, as Jack insisted that they should be married in February. Mrs. Dawson, though she had at first objected to this

arrangement, finally came to the conclusion that since it was inevitable it might as well be soon as late. Indeed after a time she came to accept it with so much meekness (other people called it pleasure) that she invited Bella to come to Greys' when Polly left Wrugglesby and stay there till the winter set in. Therefore Bella, though she assented to them, cannot be said to have had a very personal interest in Polly's plans.

As for Bill, on this particular afternoon she said nothing even with regard to the furniture, except that in reply to Polly's emphatic remark to the effect that they could not take all the rubbish with them, she said she hoped it would get a good home and be well treated. Polly considered such sentiments foolish in the extreme and, having said so, dismissed the subject from her mind and remarked: "I flatter myself that we have done very well on the whole."

Bella agreed, but Bill corrected. "It is not *we* but *you* who have done it. It was you who cadged the house in London on very low terms, you who first impressed Mrs. Dawson with the fact that we are a nice family,—oh yes, she likes Bella for herself now, but she began by liking you, or rather what she takes you to be. You arranged that, just as you arranged the contract for the repairs of this house at the end of the lease. You are a champion cadger, Polly, whatever else you are."

Polly was not certain whether to be pleased or offended by this tribute. "I think you have a great deal to thank me for," she said complacently; "I am glad you appreciate it, though I object to the word *cadger*."

"What shall I say?" Bill asked, "If you don't cadge things what do you do? Acquire them?"

"Well, yes, perhaps I do," Polly

admitted ; "yes, I suppose I have the acquisitive faculty."

"I should say you have."

"So have you,"—Polly did not like Bill's tone. "I am sure you have it ; people give you things and you don't refuse them."

Bill laughed and went over to the fire-place, the something in her pocket clinking audibly as she moved.

"What is that?" asked the inquisitive Polly.

"Oh, I had forgotten." Bill put her hand into her pocket. "It is something I brought to show you," she said, and drew out first a piece of crumpled paper in which the articles had been wrapped and then two large old-fashioned shoe-buckles.

"What are they?" Polly made a pounce on one.

"Where did you get them?" Bella took the other from the table where Bill had put them. "What are they?"

They gleamed in the fading light as the cousins held them, gleamed and shimmered with wonderful changing splendour, flashing when the firelight touched them and found a dozen answering tongues of flame.

"Paste," Polly said, "old paste ; they must be worth a lot of money."

"Diamonds," Bill corrected.

"Diamonds? Nonsense! They might be worth as much as a hundred pounds apiece if they were!"

"They are diamonds," Bill persisted, "though they can't be worth that. They are mine."

"Yours?" Polly almost screamed. "Diamonds—and yours? Talk about the acquisitive faculty!"

Bill flushed. "I did not acquire them," she said rather illogically ; "at least, I hated to have them, and I have promised to give them to somebody as a wedding-present, not yet, some day, when there is a wedding. I will give them back,—I don't care

what you say,—you need not think about selling them,—they are not going to be sold."

"Don't talk nonsense to me," was Polly's answer. "If they are diamonds they shall be sold, that is, if you have any right to them, which I am sure you have not. They must be paste!"

Bill took the buckle out of her hand, Bella placing the fellow on the table beside it : "Are they really diamonds?" she asked. "How did you come by them, and whose were they?"

Bill stood looking at them a moment as they flashed in the firelight. "They were Peter Harborough's shoe-buckles," she said.

CHAPTER XXV.

POLLY had no doubt done wisely in sending Bill to Ashelton while she herself was settling affairs at Wrugglesby. Not only was she thus freed from Bill's interference, but also Bill had an opportunity for putting into practice her good resolutions regarding Gilchrist Harborough. Polly was sure she would make use of the opportunity, for Bill could always be relied on to keep her word. In the main she fulfilled Polly's expectations ; she certainly tried to do so. Theresa found her curiously subdued on her return to Ashelton, and found also that she herself was watched and sometimes imitated with an embarrassing closeness. Bill was trying to be a lady.

She obeyed to the letter Polly's instructions concerning Gilchrist, always putting on her best dress for his coming, never calling him Theo now, never baffling him by tantalising moods and goblin mockery and playful defiance. Indeed so circumspect was her behaviour that Gilchrist not unnaturally concluded that the lecture he had given her after the affair of the plums had taken

effect. Of course he was humanly gratified to find that his words had not been wasted, but it is to be feared that he found Bill in her new character of lady, as copied from Theresa, something of a disappointment; she did not always compare favourably with her model.

Bill did not know how her efforts impressed Gilchrist, neither did she greatly care, for his opinion was not her highest standard. But she was herself by no means satisfied, and one day, soon after her return to Ashelton, she took her difficulties to her friend the rector. He, by right of his office and reason of his experience, had been consulted on many points in his time, some rather peculiar ones since his acquaintance with Bill; but even she had never faced him with anything quite so unexpected as on the day when she brought him the problem of her own behaviour. She was examining the high shelves of his book-case at the time, standing on the back of an arm-chair to do so, having first weighted the seat with encyclopædias.

"THE DIARY OF A LADY," she read the title of one of the books, then stood a moment looking at it thoughtfully. "Monseigneur," she said, "you know I told you I was trying to behave better! Well, I am not getting on a bit."

Mr. Dane was busy with his parish accounts; as a rule the girl's presence did not disturb him at all, but now he looked up, arrested by her tone.

"What is it?" he asked putting down his pen. "What have you been doing?"

"Nothing; I haven't done anything wrong and I do all the right things I can find to do. Theresa thinks I am much improved, but I'm not really." As she reached up to replace the book, the chair tilted a little. "Would you mind kneeling

on the seat?" she said. "The chair tips when I reach up. Thank you."

She jumped to the ground and drawing a chair to the writing-table faced the rector. "What is your notion of a lady?" she asked abruptly.

Mr. Dane considered a moment, before hazarding an opinion, knowing that his answer would be taken literally and perhaps translated into action. "One," he said at length, "who considers others, who never by word or deed causes unnecessary pain, who listens sympathetically, talks pleasantly, never says a great deal even when she feels much or knows more. One who does her mental and moral washing in private, but is not afraid to do her duty in public; who respects the secrets of others, the honour of her family, and her own self more than all. One who speaks with tact, acts with discretion, and places God before fashion without needlessly advertising the fact to the annoyance of the rest of the world."

"Thank you," said Bill, and a long silence followed; perhaps she was learning the definition for her own benefit. At last she spoke again. "You think I could be a lady if I learned to control myself and,—and did not run away when I wanted to, and all those sorts of things?"

Mr. Dane did think so; possibly he did not regard her as so hopeless a case as did Polly. Then there was another silence during which there came the sound of wheels on the drive at the other side of the house. Neither noticed it and Bill, thinking of Polly's lectures on her disreputable appearance, asked a second question. "I suppose a lady always wants to look right? It matters very much how she looks, how she is dressed?"

"It matters very much for some," the rector answered; but others—"

he was only a man after all and though old not altogether wise—"with others," he said, "you are so busy wondering what colour their eyes are that you never notice their gowns; so much perplexed as to what they are, Princess Puck, that you never know what they wear—"

He broke off smiling as the housekeeper opened the door: "A gentleman to see Miss Alardy," she announced.

"Me?" Bill exclaimed.

"Yes, miss; he has been to Haylands, he says, and they told him you were here; he's waiting in the hall now,—young Mr. Harborough."

"Mr. Harborough?" Bill repeated rising. "Whatever can he want?"

"Not Mr. Harborough from Crows' Farm," the housekeeper explained; "young Mr. Harborough from Wood Hall."

"Oh!—I'll come and speak to him."

Ladies controlled themselves; they said nothing even when they felt much; they respected themselves, the honour of their family, the secrets of their friends. Bill was going to be a lady, and she would not even allow herself to feel surprised.

Mr. Dane took up his pen again. Old Mr. Harborough was worse no doubt; he had been ill all the week, and that it was a mere question of days everyone knew. Probably it was a question of hours now, and for that reason they had summoned the heir. And for what reason had the heir come for Bill? If old Mr. Harborough had a fancy for seeing her again before he died Mr. Dane was not the man to gainsay him. Bill knew that, the instant he came into the hall where she stood with Kit Harborough.

"Go, by all means," was his advice, "go at once; I will explain to Mrs. Morton."

So Bill fetched her hat from the study where it lay on the encyclopædias and without another word drove away with Kit to Wood Hall. And Mr. Dane had time to finish his accounts and then explain matters to Theresa before lunch.

Theresa was very much surprised to hear of Bill's going, but since the rector approved she was quite willing to do the same. As the afternoon wore on and Bill did not return, she began to wonder a little what the girl was doing; and when in the evening Gilchrist called and Bill was still absent, she found the situation rather awkward. Gilchrist showed such an unreasonable displeasure at her absence that Theresa wished Mr. Dane could have explained to the impatient lover the propriety and justice of Bill's going. To tell the truth Gilchrist was both displeased and anxious, for he did not feel at all sure what Bill might be saying with regard to the Wood Hall estate. She had told him how she had met and warned Kit Harborough at By-mouth; and though it is true that she had listened with commendable humility to his natural explosion of anger, and at the end had assured him (with the shadow of contempt in her voice) that the heir had declined to take advantage of the warning, what guarantee was there that she might not, for some reason of her own, think fit to warn the old man in time to create unnecessary complications? Gilchrist was very uneasy indeed, not at all sure what Bill would do.

But Kit had no doubts at all. He was perfectly sure she would say nothing; and, as certain of her as he was of himself, he never once during the drive to Gurnett reopened the question of the claim. He never even mentioned it when he helped her to alight at the great door, never spoke

of it or referred to it as he led her across the echoing hall to the wide stairs and the rooms above.

Old Harborough was dying, but dying elegantly, almost as if with a subtle and unconscious recollection of what was due to the traditions of his family. He was powerless in body but terribly alert in mind, keenly conscious of the situation and accepting the inevitable with the cynicism he had shown to so many of the happenings of his life, neither curious nor afraid, politely indifferent, almost politely sceptical. Bill, the many-sided, the sympathetic, felt something like a touch of admiration for this survival of a passing type. He, on his part, feeble as he was, still received her with something of his former mocking courtesy, thanked her for troubling to come to him, apologised for the manner of her reception, and prayed her to be seated.

There was a nurse present when Bill entered the room, a tall, quiet woman who looked curiously at the girl. The man who had met Mr. Harborough with the chair that April day in the woods was also present; but he did not look curiously at Bill, either because he thought it bad manners, or else because he understood her claim to his master's interest. Both of them, however, withdrew to a more distant part of the large room. Kit remained standing near the bed, but Mr. Harborough took no notice of him, only once indirectly acknowledging his presence and then in no pleasant manner; it was when he himself apologised to Bill for not handing her to a chair.

"You must take the will for the deed," he said, "since I cannot do it; it is clear such trifling attentions will not survive the old generation."

He did not look at Kit, nevertheless the lad coloured hotly. Bill sat

down, wondering a little how the old manners would suit the new generation; but she did not say so and in a minute she dropped the thought out of her mind, turning her entire attention on Mr. Harborough. She did not find it difficult to talk to him, even though Kit was a listener, even when the old man referred to her last visit and the offer then made she felt little embarrassment.

"Are you not sorry you did not take it?" he asked her. "I'd have left you Wood Hall for as long as you remained a Harborough. Pity it was not done! It might have saved the old place; an heiress isn't always the only thing or the best thing to mend a broken family." He seemed almost to be speaking to himself, but he addressed her directly when he asked abruptly: "Are you not sorry you did not take it? By this time to-morrow it would all have been yours."

"I don't want it," she answered him vehemently. "I don't want it; I would hate to have it!"

"Hate to have it? Why, I thought you liked it?"

"I do, so much that I would hate to have it."

A priest had come quietly into the room, but, seeing Mr. Harborough engaged in conversation, he went to a distant window and opened a book he carried. Bill recognised him at once for the same man who had read the mass at Ashelton Church. Mr. Harborough followed her eyes but, not being aware that she recognised him, thought she was only wondering as to the reason of his presence.

"The last relic of the Catholic faith here," he explained in his weak harsh voice. "I have to be dressed for the next world, the last of us who ever will be. Kit is not a Catholic; he is a Purist or a Deist or something sincere and modern.

He troubles about his soul and his Creator like any other mental dyspeptic, and believes something on his own account. When I was young it was thought ill-bred to interfere with the concerns of the Almighty, and the minding of souls was left to those who were paid to do it. We were not tied down by a Sunday-school morality in those days, and we had the courage of our convictions."

Bill nodded. "I know," she said.

"How do you know?" he asked sharply.

"By you," she answered.

"By me! What have I said to you? What do you know?"

"I can't exactly explain," she said doubtfully; "only the world was different then. One can't measure you by the people of to-day, nor the people of to-day by you."

He fixed her with eyes which were still keen. "How do you know that?" he persisted.

"I don't know; I suppose I feel it."

"You are a lenient judge," he said almost softly, "about the most lenient judge I have ever had, you odd child. What an odd child! I did not know how odd the day I found you in the wood, the day you found God in the wood; you did find Him, did you not?"

"Yes," she answered simply. "He seemed very close; but then I think the devil was too."

"God and the devil at your right elbow and your left. A survival of Puritan days,—to find God in the woods now!"

The tone was not wholly mocking; there was a touch of wistfulness in it, and Bill hearing it answered it from the depth of her own convictions. "Everywhere it is beautiful one feels God," she said softly, "in forest and sea and sky." She raised her eyes and met Kit's. He may

have been guilty of a Sunday-school morality; he certainly was guilty of a belief, and he betrayed its existence then to one who shared it.

But Mr. Harborough did not know it; he was not thinking of Kit at all as he lay looking curiously at the girl. His lips moved once: "Shall see God," he said as if to himself, then raising his voice slightly he asked: "Who is it that shall see God, Father Clement?"

The priest turned. "'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God,'" he answered drawing nearer.

"The pure in heart," Mr. Harborough repeated, "that is it; I had forgotten. Well, little witch, you have seen something that I, for all my years and experience, have not; something that I—I suppose because of those years and experience—cannot see. But now I must ask you to go; there is a heavenly toilet to be made. Go down and get some lunch, but come back by-and-bye. Kit must take you; I apologise for him beforehand."

Bill rose. "Kit does not need anyone's apology," she said hotly; then she followed the young man out of the room feeling ashamed.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Kit that day was like the Kit of Bymouth, the Kit she had met in the lane; there did not seem such a gulf between them as when they parted, nor yet such terrible courtesy. They were boy and girl in the great house together, boy and girl watching together, by an odd chain of circumstances, for the coming of the great shadow. They went to the solemn old dining-room and lunched in state as Bill had once lunched with Mr. Harborough. During the meal Kit did not mention to his guest the subject which had never really been

absent from his mind since she herself first put it there that morning on the sands at Bymouth. A little while back he had had some talk with a solicitor of his acquaintance, and without betraying a personal interest in the test-case he described, had learned the very serious position of the man placed as he was. But he did not speak of it to Bill then, although, in spite of the still intangible nature of it all, he felt the shadow of this man from the new country spread over the stately old house, filling its most secret corners, taking possession of its most sacred spots. And Bill, though he did not speak of it, knew the thought that was in her companion's mind, and felt with him this haunting presence.

After lunch the doctor and nurse agreed in forbidding either Kit or his guest to see the patient before four o'clock, saying that they should be summoned then unless some unexpected change made their presence necessary earlier. There were nearly two hours before them, two hours for Kit to play host in the house which might soon pass to another. With an effort he tried to banish the thought from his mind as he asked Bill to come to the library.

"This is the room I like best," he said when they stood in the great low room where some past Harborough had gathered a store of books. Mercifully the later comers, not thinking them of sufficient value to sell, had left them intact, even, indeed, adding a volume now and then, each man according to his taste, for there was no lack of intellect even among the wildest of them. The September sunlight slanted through the broad low windows where weedy sunflowers and uncut trails of late-blooming roses looked in on a big room, irregular in shape, full of angles, with bookshelves jutting out

in unexpected places, and a silence in it which was a luxury of the brain. The light was a warm brown gloom cast back from book-lined shelves; the smell was the wonderful, indescribable smell of an old library, Russia leather, and oak shelves, and book-dust blended into one, a perfume never to be forgotten. For, as the rose on his mistress's bosom to a lover, or the breath of the clover which filled the air when he pledged his vows, so is the smell of such a library to the man of books, and above all, to the man who has been reared to it, the man who has learned by common use and childish association to love the outside of the volumes or ever he could read them within.

Bill felt her breast heave suddenly, and a great lump came in her throat. She had never been in such a library before, never to her knowledge smelt its sweet familiar smell, yet her breast heaved and she could not speak. It was absurd, of course; it was nothing to her, the books were not her friends, and as an alien she could claim no kinship with them; yet she felt for them, felt so that she could not speak. As for Kit, he had followed her into the room and stretched out a hand to set straight a book on a lower shelf, but he did not touch it; his hand dropped and he turned abruptly to a window, and for a long minute both stood silent, not regarding one another. Then Bill mastered herself with an effort.

"What is this?" she asked, taking a book at random.

It was Sir Thomas Browne's *VULGAR ERRORS*, an old folio edition with wonderful woodcuts. Kit looked at it for a moment, though he knew it well enough, and then recovering himself he told her. They took the book to the broad window-sill and together turned its pages, looking at

the curious pictures. After that he took down another book and then another; Bill was sitting on the window-sill now, the books piled beside her, while Kit drew a great wooden chair in front. In this way he showed her a Chaucer massively bound and clamped with brass, a Pope of 1717, a PILGRIM'S PROGRESS grotesquely illustrated,—the books he loved, wonderful old German prints, poets of a later date, and stout old sermon-writers with whose solid works he had built houses in childish days.

So the afternoon passed with strange pleasure to both, though neither quite forgot the shadow that hung over the house, nor the even deeper shadow not only of death, that brooded over the library and in some unexplained way touched every book they looked at and every passage they read. Once Kit took down a Milton, old and shabby and unopened, except by himself, for many years, and began to read a passage from *IL PENSEROSO*.

“ Off on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some well watered shore,
Swinging slow—”

He stopped abruptly; each heard the curfew as on that night, each smelt the scent of the wet grass in the lane. There was a pause when neither looked at the other; then he went on hurriedly, a little lower down the page:

“ Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the
room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom—”

Kit shut the book sharply and gave it up. All round him lay the heaped up volumes as they used to lie on the winter afternoons when he had built towers with the works of the divines in that same glowing gloom. He

glanced at the wide fireplace; Bill had glanced at it before him, because she too had thought of it, though she had never seen it when the fire burned low at twilight. So they each looked, and then each looked at the other and neither, for all their resolutions, hid the thought nor pretended to hide it. Bill's throat began to swell again. A volume of Hooker, balanced on the window-sill, fell with a thud to the floor. Kit took a long time in picking it up, and when at last he put it in a place of safety with Marcus Aurelius on the top, he said: “He would love the books.”

It was perfectly unnecessary to explain who *he* was; Bill knew and thought of Gilchrist's tastes and book-shelf before she answered: “Yes, I think he would.” She picked up the *MEDITATIONS*. “He has got this,” she said; “his is in English, though, bound in green cloth, and cost one and sixpence. I believe he would like his own edition better; it is cheaper and clearer.”

Kit silently took the imperial philosopher from the girl's hand, as she got down from the window-seat and helped him to put the books back in their places. Neither spoke of Gilchrist again; and a little later someone came to fetch them to Mr. Harborough.

They went up-stairs together and quietly into the old man's room. Bill noticed a difference directly she entered; she needed no one to tell her that she had been called to say good-bye to the eccentric old man she had so little known.

“Come here,” he said hoarsely when he saw her hesitate near the door.

She came and stood close to him, Kit standing on the other side of the bed.

“Here's a keepsake for you,” he whispered, trying to raise his nerveless hand. “I give it you in the pre-

sence of witnesses," he glanced at the nurse as he spoke, "so there will be no dispute afterwards. It is not an heirloom, and I can do with it as I like. Put your hand on mine, take it, here."

Bill put her hand in his as requested and the cold powerless fingers beneath her warm touch fumbled feebly before the two glittering buckles fell into her hand.

"There," he said triumphantly, "they are for you ; that is, if you will do me the favour of accepting them."

"For me?" she said gazing half bewildered, half fascinated by the brilliancy of the stones.

"Yes, for you," Mr. Harborough told her. "They are yours now, the gift is witnessed," he went on for she hardly seemed to realise the fact. Then she stooped and kissed the hand that gave them.

"They were Peter Harborough's shoe-buckles," he whispered, "about the only thing he did not lose at cards ; he lost everything else even including—" there was a little cough for breath—"including his life. My father left them to me ; they are my own ; I can do with them as I like, and I like to give them to you. They are all the diamonds we have now and," addressing Kit with a sudden access of spite, "no wife of yours can have them now."

Bill dropped the buckles as if they had burnt her ; they fell with a clink on the counterpane and lay there, a sparkle of light. "I can't take them," she said. "I won't have them ; you, —you don't understand."

Kit leaned across and, picking them up, gently gave the buckles back to her. He did not speak, but there was something in his manner she could not resist.

"That's right," the old man muttered as if he had not fully understood. "They are yours, little witch ;

he can't take them ; I have given them to you."

Bill grasped them in silence, pressing the sharp stones into her flesh.

"Now good-bye," Harborough said more clearly, "good-bye, or shall we say *au revoir*?" His breath failed him for a moment but he recovered himself and went on cynically. "I have to go through with this business, and being new to it I may bungle. In case I do not die decently I would rather not disgrace myself in the presence of a lady."

So Bill said good-bye and went out. Kit opened the door for her, and shutting it after her, left her standing alone outside. So she stood a moment, like one in a dream, the diamonds still pressed into her flesh ; then she turned and went with slow steps down the stairs, with quickening steps across the hall to the open door, and so out into the garden where the afternoon shadows were long and the tender warmth of September lay over everything. She followed the terraced path awhile, and then, her steps still quickening, crossed the lawn where the grass was emerald green and the elm leaves lay scattered here and there. She was almost running now, quite running when she came to the shrubbery, running at full speed, running blindly, wildly, faster and faster until she reached the wood and flung herself down in the waist-deep bracken and sobbed as if her heart would break.

It was much later when Kit found her, knowing perhaps where to look for her. She had told him of her first ramble in the wood ; at any rate when all was over, he found her under the yellowing beeches half hidden among the ferns. She started when she heard his step beside her, and at first was minded to pretend she had not been crying and practise a belated self-control. But she did not, chiefly

because he did not pretend ; he made no pretence of anything, nor yet behave in the manner expected of him and worthy of his breeding. He sat down beside her without speaking, whereupon she obstinately buried her face in the bracken and would not so much as look up though the stiff fern-stalks pricked her neck. She moved her head uneasily and he gently broke a stalk away ; in doing so his hand came in contact with her hair, a little curl of which, having become loosened, had contrived to get wet with tears. The contact with it, and the recognition that it was wet with tears, were things Kit did not soon forget ; but he drew his hand away and only said stupidly : "Don't cry, please don't cry ; I didn't know you cared about him like that."

"He was good to me"—Bill's voice was muffled by the ferns—"but it isn't exactly that."

He had not been good to Kit, yet Kit felt vaguely grieved and shocked by his death ; he looked in some perplexity at the girl beside him. "What is it then?" he asked, but she did not answer so he fell back on his first remark and entreated her not to cry any more.

"I shall," she answered without looking up. "I have not cried half enough yet,—there are so many things.—I haven't nearly done."

Kit glanced rather hopelessly at the half buried figure. "Are you going to cry for them in order?" he asked attempting to smile.

"Yes."

Nevertheless Bill, with the sunny lights coming back to her eyes, sat up rustling the dead leaves as she did so. "I wonder if the wood will be cut down," she said wistfully, as she glanced up at the interwoven branches above her.

"No," Kit told her, "for neither you nor I would allow it."

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"I?"

"Yes ; if it is not mine it will be yours, or as good as yours."

"Mine?"

"Yes ; if it is Theo's—you said you were going to marry him—it will be yours too, and I am glad."

"Glad ! I am not."

Her voice was passionate, almost vindictive, and Kit went on quickly : "I am glad, and you ought to be too. You said once that, were you in my place, you would do anything to get Wood Hall ; surely you ought not to mind if you have it."

"I'm not in your place," Bill said, "and I don't want it a bit. Do anything to get it ! A woman can't do anything but be married. I don't want Theo to have it, and I don't want to come here."

She buried her face in the ferns again, but now she did not cry. Kit broke the stiff fern-stalk into little pieces, and as he threw them away caught sight of the buckles shining among the ferns near the girl's arm. Bill heard them clink as he picked them up, and sat up again, facing him now with a calm determination. "I am not going to have them," she said quietly.

"You must ; you can't help yourself. They were given to you, and you must have them," and he dropped them in her lap.

"I am not going to have them," she repeated ; "had he known, he would not have given them to me."

"No, because very probably they would have come to you in any case ; I don't know how such things go, but it is likely they would have come to you. At all events they are yours beyond dispute now."

"Mine, not my husband's?"

"Certainly, yours absolutely."

"Mine to do with as I like?"

The sense of ownership seemed to please the girl. Kit wondered why a little, but he did not ask and her

next words explained. "Then I can give them to whom I please? I shall give them to your wife on her wedding-day."

Bill put the rejected buckles in her pocket, but Kit said quietly: "That you will never do, for I shall never marry."

(To be continued.)

THE NEW ART.

ART and archæology are pursuits commonly associated together, in programmes and prospectuses at all events; but artist and archæologist are always, because temperamentally, at odds. There is on the one side the man of science, who would have art dependent upon learning, and on the other the man of skill, who claims to be free of the past and all its works. If either of them can be said to be in the right, it is only from his own narrow point of view; but each in turn prevails over popular opinion, to the exclusion of the other. A generation or so ago it was the man of learning who preached that art was not art unless it was a revival of the past. Just now it is the man unlearned who will have no dealings with the past; for him it is dead.

Dead as it may seem, the seed of the future is in it; and the idea of a New Art, of which we hear so much, is as far from possible realisation as that of the Gothic Revival, which we have outlived. We see now, in the light of a new century, how foolish was the flirtation between art and archæology, how hopeless the entanglement, how impossible any lasting tie between them. What more tedious to us than the perfunctory attempts at antiquarian art which in their day made such a stir in the world?

So long as there are men whose hearts are in the past, the past will be reflected in their art. It is not with them a question of choice, but of necessity; they go the way of their bent; they cannot help it, and no chiding of ours will turn them from it. Indeed it is not our affair but

theirs, the condition on which they give us of their best is, that they be allowed to work with free hands. They are no less free to bring archæology to bear upon their art than we are to leave it out of ours. The mistake was ever to insist upon medievalism, ever to impose upon the latter part of the nineteenth century the style of ages gone. It could but lead to insincerity and affectation. So lifeless seems to us already the work, or most of it, done in the name of the Gothic Revival, that we find ourselves doubting if it can ever have been alive. The art of here and there an artist, living, as it were, back in the Middle Ages and imbued with their poetry, may last; the rest is already lumber.

The question now is whether, in the violence of reaction against the enforced adoption of some historic style, we may not have gone too far in the direction of a new style, as it is called, which in reality is no more representative of us than medievalism was representative of our fathers. The present temper is to break abruptly with tradition, and to dismiss from our minds all thought of what has till now been done. As though we could! As though to-day were not the direct consequence of yesterday! This mood cannot last. There is not much to choose between the folly of never looking back for direction and the foolishness of looking only behind us. It is idle to pretend that the present is, or can be, or should be, independent of the past, even of the distant past. Grant the undue preponderance of medieval influence upon Victorian art,

and the absurd degree to which antiquarian considerations were allowed to prevail over æsthetic, it were almost better to make no protest against this scientific blunder than, by protesting against it, to countenance the notion that the study of the best that has been done in art is anything less than essential to our doing the best it is in us to do. The absurd theory of our modern self-sufficiency is absurdly modern. A short generation ago no man would have been rash enough to propound it.

At the root of the new movement is the spirit not merely of revolution but also of anarchy. It is not harsh laws that are defied by the New artist; he will abide no law. It is not a given way he declines to go; he is bent on straying. Small blame to the man who refuses to be tethered to the signpost; but why not avail oneself of the roads? Possibly they may have been worn here and there into ruts,—which may be a reason for leaving them awhile, but not for long; the best, the safest, and the quickest way proves always in the end to be some trodden track.

True, there has been far too much dogmatism as to which is the right way. "All roads lead to Rome"; yes, but it has not yet become proverbial that the way to get there is to wander, according to the mood of the moment, over hill and waste where not a foot-track is to be seen. That may lead to all manner of pleasant places, but not to a fixed destination. Were it not wiser of the artist who knows where he wants to go, and means to get there, to follow for the first part of his journey at least, perhaps for a long way on it, the road, the high road even, and so save his strength for the toils of that portion of the way which he will necessarily have to explore for himself? The mistake of pedantry has been to insist

upon one only way, whereas, such is the personal quality of art, so much does it depend upon a man's temperament, that a road demonstrably the shortest is not for everyone the surest and most expeditious. Each must choose his own path, and is himself the best judge as to which that may be; so much of freedom is necessary to the spontaneous exercise of art, but no one nowadays denies an artist that right; the danger is no longer lest freedom be restricted, but lest licence go without restraint. The time when some historic style, imposed by authority, lay like a weight upon the individuality of the artist is past, and well past; what weighs upon it now is the pretended style of to-day. The past is dead; and from its ashes there is arisen the New Art, the art that is to be, the art which each man thinks to evolve for himself out of himself.

This New Art is nothing if not original. And yet, so fearful is it of its own originality, so mistrustful of its individuality, that it will look neither to the right nor to the left; still less dare it on any account look back, lest somehow the virgin purity of its vision be sullied. And all the while it is unconscious of the images reflected from every side, images which, whatever may at first have been the piquancy of their most strange distortion, are by this time the very commonest property of design, with the least pretensions to be (according to its own elegant phraseology) up-to-date.

So it happens that the new originality ends always in the same sort of thing, though not one genius of them all doubts for a moment that his art expresses his own most personal idea, or suspects that his favourite swirl is indeed nothing but the unconscious reproduction of forms which begin already to be as hacknied as those

of any orthodox period. If only they were half as beautiful! The Greek fret becomes at last tiresome by perpetual repetition, but how soon we tire of the new meander! And it is not in ornament alone that we are determined to be new. Think of it! we rebel against the authority of the Parthenon,—only to submit to the sway of the Poster! The fashion is to seek, instead of beauty, novelty. But the New Art is not so new as its exponents think; and the idea underlying it is no newer than the forms it takes, though we work it nowadays for all that it is worth, as the saying is, or more than it is worth, and worry a notion to death in a shorter time than was ever done before. There is no more individuality (nowadays less indeed) in looking round about you for inspiration than in looking backwards, in looking downwards than in looking upwards. It is no sign of independence to avoid the purest sources, and for no better reason than that they are known.

The bigoted demand for antiquity in modern art came from the study; the frivolous demand for novelty comes from the shop. The recommendation of the newest thing, and the idea that it has something to recommend it, come to us from across the counter.

Was there ever, apart from the salesman's point of view, a more preposterous conception than that of a New Art? As though we were not still and always the children of the past! As though the artist were not what he is through those who went before him! As though he did not begin with inheritances (possibilities as well as disabilities) for which he is in no wise responsible! The true meaning of invention is the strict one, something not all ours, but which we find and make our own.

Man's imagination is no blank

sheet upon which at his maturity personal fancies and emotions write themselves. Before ever he begins to feel or think for himself time prints upon its sensitive surface images deliberately to be effaced only by effort not worth the while, seeing how much there is in these traces of the past which he may turn to personal, nay, to original account. A man of real initiative arrives at absolutely original results even though he may take for his starting-point the thing which has been done. What paralyses individuality is only to accept it as an end. Novelty itself is by rights the result of changing conditions; it comes naturally of our accepting them; and the craving for a new style is about as reasonable as the hankering after an old one. Between adopting an old formula and manufacturing a new one, the choice is only a choice of evils.

We vex ourselves to little purpose about style. It does not come by conscious effort. Sober workmen, intent on their work and not thinking about it, are all the while building it up. From time to time we note a stage of progress and call it perhaps new. Only in so far is art ever new.

All unconsciously some man, stronger than the rest and more consummate master of his craft, asserts his individuality, and, not of masterfulness aforethought, but simply because he is a master, imposes it upon his fellows, who become his followers, work in his manner, echo him; and so he sets a fashion, and a style is formed. There comes in time another strong personality, and a new style arises. Thus fashions change even without the aid of trade whose business it is to foster them, even to foist them upon us. And who shall judge them? This much at least may be taken as certain, that of all fashions the one least safe to follow is the last

new fashion, the one, that is to say, which has not yet stood the test of time, the one which is so near to us that we do not see it in perspective, the one which a haze of popularity magnifies out of all just appreciation.

And yet the cunning pedlar of to-day has only to cry "New lamps for old," and, as in the mythical past when young Aladdin gave away his talisman, we vie in eagerness to yield up, in exchange for trash, traditions of design artistically above price.

For the student, it is of his age to be carried along with the current; he has this excuse for ignoring the past, that he really knows nothing of it. The more the pity; and the more the blame to his teachers, their plain duty being to guide him in the right path, little attraction as it may have for him, and the less it attracts him the more persistently to point it out. For the cunning purveyor of novelty, it is his trade to make much of a new commodity. But for the men who know or ought to know, what are we to think of them when they are caught by the cry, when the appointed guardians of art-teaching acclaim the latest upstart eccentricity and hail it for the newest art? Yet it has come to this, that the powers responsible for the conduct of our great storehouse of practical and industrial art have so far yielded to the temptation of the moment as to remove from their place of honour in the national museum masterpieces of Renaissance cabinet-work and carving to make room for the ultimate expression of fantastic extravagance in French furniture-design, and to cover up priceless tapestries with designs about on a level with the street poster, even with the very advertisement sheets themselves. It is significant that the new form of decorative figure-design accepts the poster for its standard. That is perhaps a new

idea. As for the ever-recurring swirl of line which does duty for new ornament, it resolves itself at its best into something so like the *rocaille* of Louis Quinze that one is disposed to greet it as an old friend,—or enemy, as the case may be. It is not denied that good work may take at times the incoherent form which we identify as the New Art; it is merely asserted that the best in the New Art is not that which is new, and the newest in it is the reverse of good.

In truth the value of the new endeavour is that it endeavours. There are signs in it of life and energy. It promises something; and courage counts for much, even the courage to go astray. In the way of accomplishment it has little to show, nothing certainly to compare with the art which in a remote or recent past has earned the admiration of artists; and to give it a place among the treasures of the nation is at once to place it in a false light, and, by recognition at the best premature, to stifle what promise there may be in it.

Regarded as the outlet of youthful restlessness, its extravagance may pass; as the serious expression of mature art it lacks coherence, sober sense, and sanity. If this is what comes of avoiding the path of precedent and turning a deaf ear to the voice of tradition, what further proof is needed to show how absolutely necessary it is to an artist that he should know what has been done before and how it has been done?

The theory is, that nature is enough, that an artist has only to look at her and she will guide him in the right path,—but there is absolutely no shadow of a reason why nature should point out the way of art. In relying wholly upon nature the artist is no better advised than in trusting altogether to art. The New Art, indeed, cannot be said to breathe

the spirit of nature; but professed allegiance to nature does not lead always to natural results. It has resulted before now in ornament more suggestive of railway-signals than of any natural growth; it has resulted also in the New Art; at least, its votaries take shelter under the name of nature. And, until now, it has hardly been denied that the artist, study nature as he may, and as he must, is bound to study the methods of art also, aye, and the works of artists before him; or, admirably as he may do, he will fall short of his possible achievement. The sincere artist seeks always the best, not the newest expression of his personality.

A new art impatient to break with the old, merely because it is old, proclaims itself *parvenu*. It is all very well at a time like the turn of the century to take stock of art; but, in dismissing as old stock anything in the nature of last season's goods, we act like men of business merely. To an artist the true criterion is beauty.

The new century affects to believe that whatever is established is already out of date; but then the century is very young. It will arrive, in its turn, at the knowledge that art has no age, and that the pursuit of novelty is the oldest of illusions.

LEWIS F. DAY.

FRANCESCO CRISPI.

Up to the first days of May, 1860, Garibaldi entertained grave doubts as to the possible success of the expedition into Sicily. Moreover, the natural inclination which he felt to succour Nice, his birthplace, and to prevent, even with force, its annexation by France, made him hesitate, while a long cherished dream led him to prefer the Eternal City, as a gift to United Italy, rather than Sicily, where the insurrections of Bagheria and Palermo had already been sternly repressed.

Crispi saw all his carefully prepared plans threatened with destruction. For it was Crispi who had now succeeded in obtaining from the Piedmontese government, which had expelled him from Turin a few years previously, more than a sympathetic neutrality, a veritable support. It was he who persuaded the Milan Revolutionary Committee to furnish the necessary arms, and inspired Garibaldi with confidence in his epic project. But the General still hesitated, remembering the unfortunate expeditions of Murat, of the brothers Bandiera, of Pisacane, who had been shot down almost immediately after setting foot on the land which Crispi asserted to be ripe for insurrection and anxious to embrace the cause of its liberators. Nevertheless, a few days before his interview with Garibaldi, Francesco Crispi had hired a small sailing-vessel, and, landing in Sicily, had secretly visited the principal centres of the island, where a sentence of death hung over him like a sword of Damocles. He had found the most daring and ardent

partisans of his revolutionary plans discouraged and afraid to organise an uprising against the forty thousand men of the Bourbon army. At last Garibaldi, tortured by his doubts and indecision between Rome and Nice, after having walked up and down his room in a fever of uncertainty, turned abruptly on Crispi, and asked him almost fiercely: "Do you render yourself responsible to me for Sicily?"

Crispi calm and assured, replied: "Yes, General."

"On your life?"

"On my life."

"Take care; I show no mercy to those who deceive me."

"If I deceive you, you may do what you like with me."

"All right; then we shall start."

This is how Francesco Crispi sums up the rapid events of the following months in his diary.

On the 5th of May we sailed from Quarto; on the 11th we landed at Marsala; on the 15th we won the battle of Calatafimi; on the 27th we made our entry into Palermo, which was at once evacuated by the enemy; on the 22nd of July we triumphed at Milazzo; on the 7th of September we entered Naples, and finally on the 1st of October, by the victory of the Volturno, we swept away the last vestiges of the Bourbon's throne.

Had Crispi answered Garibaldi's brow-beating questions with less assurance, had he not offered his life as the guarantee of his statements, had he, in a word, not been possessed of that boundless confidence in himself which always distinguished him, it is certain that the nineteenth cen-

ture would not have witnessed one of the noblest episodes of the epic of the Risorgimento.

His deeply-rooted and unlimited self-confidence was the principal reason of Francesco Crispi's popular success. It was this boundless confidence in his own powers which rendered him almost unconscious of danger and gave him courage to run the greatest risks, as, for instance, when he secretly visited Sicily with the borrowed names of Manuel Pereda and Tobia Glivaje to prepare the insurrection, or when, as Prime Minister, he accepted Bismarck's invitation to Friedrichsruhe merely to show Europe that Italy was not afraid to defy France. Even when he was forced to relinquish the reins of power, crushed by the military disaster of Adowa, this exaggerated individual sentiment prevented Crispi from adequately appreciating his share of responsibility in the terrible disaster, which caused more victims than all the wars of the Italian Independence. And when the Radical party of the Chamber of Deputies covered him with execration and abuse his only answer to their indignant shouts was: "Whenever Italy shall need me, she may count upon me." Even in the face of the disaster, in an atmosphere of dismay and discouragement, Crispi felt the necessity of re-affirming his great personality, in order to reassure the weak and timid and to prove to sceptics that Italy could still boast of one great man. Like Louis the Fourteenth, Crispi felt himself really superior to all other men, and in affirming this superiority there was so much confidence and evident self-belief that he actually avoided falling into ridicule.

This exaggerated individual sentiment manifested itself in Crispi under the guise of a powerful will and of great courage. It was thanks to

these two qualities that he succeeded in imposing himself upon the mass of the Italians, who are precisely lacking in them. For although the Italians as a people are intelligent, their intelligence is cold and sceptical; they are indolent, moreover, avoiding hard work, and becoming easily tired after a long suspense. The average Italian, therefore, gladly accepts a sort of social Buddhism which keeps him away from political struggles. During forty years, if we except the Radical movement now taking place, the masses have never taken a lively interest in any social or political question, and the Italian Parliament has never represented in reality any section of public opinion. A man possessing Crispi's courage and power of will finds no difficulty in imposing himself on a sceptical and apathetic mass, having no ideas of its own to uphold. At one time, indeed, it could have been said without exaggeration that Crispi had become a veritable Dictator in Italy. The Parliamentary opposition to his government had almost completely disappeared, and when, during his second term of office, the Opposition rose against him and became comparatively active, Crispi violated with impunity all parliamentary rights, proroguing the sessions and dissolving Parliament without offending public opinion or giving rise to any manifestation or protest.

Crispi is not an Italian type, his tendencies and characteristics being, indeed, quite opposed to it. In his exaggerated sentiment of individuality we see reproduced a type which is very common in Sicily, where this hypertrophy of personality indicates great energies and explains the daring, the love of adventure, and the rapid resolutions which are characteristics of the islanders. But the Sicilian often lacks the analytic

faculty and the positive sense, because he does not possess modern culture. Crispi had a veritable cult for the Sicilian philosopher Empedocles, and used to say that compared with him even Kant, Hegel, or Hartmann are unimportant. In the Sicilian what prevails is the worship of force which is suggested by his surroundings, by nature, by legend, and by history itself. Etna with its fantastic eruptions and with its earthquakes which destroy whole cities, the semi-tropical sun and vegetation, such historical memories as the battle of Hymera, the Giants' Temple at Agrigentum, the tyrants Cleander, Panætius, and Phalaris, the bells which gave the signal of the insurrection against the French, and all the epic struggles of the islanders against the invaders who came like birds of prey from Africa, Asia, and Europe; all these are memories which go far towards forming the Sicilian character.

Crispi was one of the highest manifestations of the psychological characteristics peculiar to the Sicilian. One of the most general accusations against him is that, even when a minister, he remained the conspirator that he was between 1848 and 1860. But the charge is false. Crispi remained what he was even before 1848; he remained—what the social and historic *milieu* had made him, a worshipper of that spirit of power which, repressed by bondage and civilisation, has transformed itself into a revolutionary and conspiring spirit. The whole social movement of modern times, even in its most rational manifestations, was always regarded by Crispi as a conspiracy and explained in the lights of his vast and deep, but exclusively classical, culture. For instance, he attributed the Sicilian riots of 1893, which were the result of misery and

hunger, to a Franco-Russian conspiracy having for its object to deprive Italy of its most fertile island. The solemn denunciation of this imaginary conspiracy from his seat in the Chamber of Deputies, where he also declared that he had documents to prove its existence, brought upon him an avalanche of ridicule. Again, Crispi attributed the socialist movement which had its centre in Milan to the separatist tendencies of Lombardy. On another occasion, always judging from his classical point of view, he defined Socialism as a return to the Communism of Sparta. Crispi, therefore, was a characteristic instance of that Sicilian type so common in the Terre Promise of Paul Bourget, and of which Giorgio Arcoleo, who has carefully analysed it, says: "They live to-day, but they think as if a century ago." Crispi was still so powerfully under the influence of the social *milieu* in which he was born, that, having been away from it for nearly sixty-five years, he still made use of the Sicilian dialect in private conversation.

It was from that cult of power that Crispi derived the conception of a greater Italy, politically and militarily strong. He shared the error of all those who contributed in building up modern Italy, men who, like Cavour, Bonghi, and Minghetti, had a wide economic culture, but thought that Italy, being a naturally rich country, could undertake the most expensive enterprises with impunity. Even so late as the electoral campaign of 1890 Crispi still upheld this theory. When he became Prime Minister the Budget of the State was nearly in equilibrium, the total yearly outlay amounting to about 1,400,000 Italian *lire*. But already in the year 1888-89 he had brought this sum up to 1,736,000, with the result that a

deficit of 235,000,000 *lire* remained, and there was no possibility of filling it and restoring the balance. In fact, during the years Crispi was in office the Italian Debt increased by leaps and bounds.

But while he exhausted the finances of the country in order to give it a navy which at one time ranked third in Europe after those of England and France, and in order to strengthen and reorganise the army on a German model, Crispi embarked Italy on a terrible political and economic struggle with France, he raised his country to Germany's level in the Triple Alliance and gave a political meaning to the friendship with Great Britain.

It is Crispi's glory to have accomplished what neither the weak Ricasoli and Minghetti Cabinets, although nominally followers of Cavour's policy, nor the Rattazzi or Depretis Ministries, hampered as they were with the opportunism of their home policy, ever succeeded in doing, namely to demonstrate that Italy belongs to the group of great European Powers. But Crispi, in his worship for power and in the excessive vanity of his grand individuality, conquered a place for Italy among the great Powers of Europe at a terrible sacrifice to the country itself. "You are too great for a country like Italy," Count D'Arco remarked to him one day; and if we take the edge of irony from this compliment, it becomes the most just appreciation of the man. Crispi himself once exclaimed: "If only I had made England instead of Italy!"

In the face of violent opposition and hostility Crispi never relinquished his dream of a greater Italy. He embarked upon the African war merely because Italy, like the other great States of Europe, was to have her colonies, and that war cost six hundred millions of *lire*, besides shameful

humiliations. The rupture of the commercial treaty with France, caused by Crispi's policy, who wished to affirm Italy's moral independence, produced a terrible crisis in the peninsula and delayed its economic development at least ten years. It was not before 1900 that Italy's foreign commerce recovered from the shock and rose again to three milliards of *lire*, as it had been in the year which preceded the war of tariffs with France. And under the influence of his policy it was easy to mark the progressive impoverishment of the country, as demonstrated by the steady decline in the consumption of such necessary articles as bread, meat, sugar, and coffee.

If Crispi succeeded in imposing for many years an expensive military policy upon a country such as Italy, where the numerous ills caused by denutrition reap thousands of lives every year and keep the southern provinces in a state bordering upon barbarism, this grave political error demonstrates to what an eminent degree the man who imposed it upon a nation of thirty-two millions of inhabitants must have possessed self-confidence, courage, and power of will.

When Crispi saw the signs of dissatisfaction and the economic ills caused by his policy increasing to a dangerous extent, then he would have recourse to his extraordinarily fervid imagination, which seldom failed to come to his aid. Thus when, following the dictates of his authoritative character, he had become a reactionary, in a speech pronounced at Palermo on May 15th, 1892, he spoke of the rights of labour in a veritable socialistic strain, and shortly afterwards introduced a bill which aimed at the abolition of the *latifondi* or extensive landed property in Italy. On another occasion the politician who had always violently

advocated the destruction of the Temporal Power, following an open anti-clerical policy, attempted to bring about a conciliation between modern Italy and the Vatican, and in 1895 maintained in a speech at Naples the necessity of living in peace with the Papacy. In 1894 Crispi, who had hitherto been the most pugnacious of Italian politicians and had despised all opposition, on being again called to the government invoked the *trêve de Dieu* of all parties, just as in 1890, after having shown his contempt for the policy of commercial treaties, he proposed to Count von Caprivi the formation of a Central European Federation of Customs. In another age, with an imagination so fervid and inconstant, Crispi might have become the apostle of some new religion or led a crusade to the Holy Land.

But it was not in Crispi's nature to pause in order to perfect the little fleeting projects of his fervid fantasy. His intellectual and political personality was too deeply imbued with the desire to make a greater Italy, from the political greatness and military strength of which he hoped that the economic good of the country would spring up as a natural and necessary result. Though he had on several occasions drawn up a complete programme of political and administrative reforms, and though in 1860, as Garibaldi's minister, he had shown in those dictatorial decrees, which constitute perhaps his best work as a statesman, that he was possessed of a powerful administrative and organising mind, he sacrificed everything to this grand ideal of raising Italy to the rank of a great Power. As early as 1866, when he had not yet been converted to the monarchical faith and was still a Radical, he spoke as follows: "We have had civil wars and powerful revolutions, but a war

in which Italy alone has struggled with the foreigner and shown her strength has still to take place. It is well that there should be such a war. Italy needs a baptism of blood; she owes it to herself, so that the great nations of Europe may know that she too is a great nation, and sufficiently strong to command respect in the world."

In Crispi's mind political power, backed by cannon and bayonets, was to open the way to riches and prosperity for Italy, as it had done for Germany. All his life he basked in the rays of this great ideal. To this he sacrificed his republican faith and rebelled against Mazzini, whose disciple he had been: to the realisation of it he devoted his whole political career which has been an uninterrupted struggle of half a century's duration; and as he was always fixed in this ideal, he often appeared to be an opportunist in politics, the Gambetta of Italy, as he was called.

He has died with the tormenting consciousness of having never realised his ideal and of having been always misunderstood. One day, not long before his death, the conversation turned upon Bismarck, and on the great work he had accomplished: "But he was thirty years in power and had time to carry out a programme!" exclaimed Crispi. And this man who, in the enthusiasm of his ideals, always remained a child, and could never see FEDORA acted without evincing deep emotion, also on this occasion was unable to refrain from shedding tears.

If Crispi, after the disaster of Adowa, voluntarily abandoned the government, presenting his resignation in the Chamber of Deputies, although he was still sure of a majority, if he spontaneously withdrew from political life, this must not be attributed to lack of courage

or resolution. For these redeeming qualities of the statesman were never lost or crushed, not even by the overwhelming military disaster or by the terrible accusations brought against him in connection with the shameless squandering of public money during the African war. Crispi was only conquered by age and fatigue, which had at length got the best of his powerful constitution. During his last period of office Crispi began to suffer from such frequent and serious losses of memory that he even forgot what had been decided in a preceding Cabinet Council. During this sad closing scene he was surrounded by crowds of parasites whom he had no longer the strength to drive away, and who, under the false guise of friendship, were the real authors of the plundering of public funds for which Crispi was responsible. And he also tolerated in his Cabinet ministers, like Sonnino, whose policy was notoriously opposed to his own, and whose resignation he would in happier days have peremptorily demanded, as he had done in his first Cabinet.

But the nervous and intellectual *debacle* began even before his last tenure of office. Only thus can we explain the phenomenon of a statesman, whose political experience and abilities were recognised even by his adversaries, committing a deliberate suicide in 1891 when he pronounced a few stupid and perfectly useless phrases against a section of the Chamber of Deputies which had hitherto always supported him and which consequently rose as one man against him and forced him to resign. Nor is it to be wondered at if Crispi at the age of seventy, after a life

spent in continual struggles and in uninterrupted, feverish activity, should begin to show signs of fatigue. During this last sad period, of his exaggerated individual sentiment, of his powerful will and blind courage, nothing remained but the gesture, the famous *colpo di pugno*, or emphatic striking of the fist, more expressive than any amount of vehement words.

With Crispi disappears one of the greatest political figures of the past century, a man gifted with a marvellous power of imagination, capable of conceiving and carrying out the epic expedition of the Thousand, and so conscious of his own commanding personality that he was courageous to the point of foolhardiness, and so full of his political ideal as to subdue and drag into his way of thinking even his adversaries themselves.

It would be difficult to say whether he assumed the reins of power too late to fully carry out his political programme, or whether that programme was in itself a mistake, a mere Utopia for a country like Italy. All Italy is now trying to solve the dispute, and even over his grave there are two opposite parties, the one praising the deceased statesman with exaggerated fervour, the other continuing to pelt him with insults and the most terrible accusations.

But of Crispi's great energy and resolute will, which made him known as the Dictator by his adversaries, no beneficial result has remained in a country so disorganised as Italy, and the only visible vestige of his work is the financial exhaustion brought about by his government.

G. M. FIAMINGO.

AN UNPUBLISHED POEM BY ROBERT BURNS.

[The following verses were recently found among some papers belonging to the late Mrs. Berrington, who died in 1885. During a great part of her life Mrs. Berrington lived in Monmouthshire, at no great distance from Itton Court, the home of Mrs. Curre, to whom, according to the endorsement on the manuscript, the verses were addressed by Burns. Mrs. Curre, who died in 1823, was the daughter of John Bushby, Esq., of Tinwald Downs in Dumfriesshire. The copy from which the verses are printed is in the early handwriting of the late Miss Eliza Waddington, whose family also lived in Monmouthshire. It is hoped that the present publication may lead to the discovery of the original manuscript.]

Oh look na, young Lassie, sae softly and sweetly !
 Oh smile na, young Lassie, sae sweetly on me !
 Ther's nought waur to bear than the mild glance of pity
 When grief swells the heart and the tear blins the e'e.

Just such was the glance of my bonnie lost Nancy,
 Just such was the glance that once brightened her e'e ;
 But lost is the smile sae impressed on my fancy,
 And cauld is the heart that sae dear was to me.

Ilka wee flow'ret we grieve to see blighted,
 Cow'ring and with'ring in frost nippet plain ;
 The naist turn of Spring shall awauken their beauty,
 But ne'er can Spring wauken my Nancy again.

And was she less fair than the flow'rs of the garden
 Was she less sweet than the blossoms of May ?
 Oh, was na her cheek like the rose and the lily,
 Like the Sun's waving glance at the closing o' day ?

And oh sic a heart, sae gude and sae tender !
 Weel was it fitted for beauty sae leal :
 Twas as pure as the drop in the bell o' the lily,
 A wee glinting gem wi' nought to conceal.

But the blush and the smile and the dark e'es mild glances,
 I prized them the maist, they were love's kind return,
 Yet far less the loss of sic beauty lamented,
 'Twas the love that she bore me that gaes me to mourn.

DICKENS AND MODERN HUMOUR.

THE conceptions of novelists, though not necessarily their power of treatment, have grown continuously from the beginning. If we take Fielding as a starting-point—though he himself, with trouble, may be proved a direct descendant (shall we say?) of Apuleius and Homer—we shall find a steady growth in the extent of the material which the novel is thought fit to cover. The stages of the growth may be suitably marked by Fielding, Scott, Hugo or Balzac, George Eliot, and even Mr. George Meredith. In the last instance there is clearly no increase of skill, of actual merit, of poignancy, on the work of Fielding. It is merely that the aim and scope have altered, and on the whole, if judged by intention, not by performance, *THE EGOIST* is as much superior to *NOTRE DAME* as *NOTRE DAME* is to *TOM JONES*. Using the test of evolution, the more complex is a development of the more simple, the bird of Paradise many ages superior to the archæopteryx. But it is even more true that *THE EGOIST* is incomparably inferior to *TOM JONES*. The later author reminds one of a belated traveller stumbling about a field of turnips on a dark night; there are curses, headlong scrambles to prevent a fall, somersaults, terrors of looming shapes, stops to kick off the gathered mud, weariness, and but little progress. When, if ever, the writer reaches home a glow of pride for the memorable difficulties he has conquered is intense; such a task none ever before attempted, and if the labour was long and the method un-*gainly*, what matter? *Finis* can be

written with a flourish, and writer and reader are together proud. Fielding did not try such a route; he turned into the road and moved smoothly along, neither fast nor slow, now and again, if he felt so disposed, leaning on the top bar of a gate to express his gratitude that nowadays cross-country routes were unnecessary; when he reached home he had his dinner and went to sleep, happy enough but not particularly proud. Why should he be? He had travelled, with a good deal of pleasure, his natural course. Like many of Fielding's successors, Mr. Meredith has been too ambitious; why should they strain to make the novel an amalgamation of all literature? The teller of a story should be above all things unconscious; and, in spite of development and theories, a novel still depends for its claim to merit on the sheer capacity for romantic narration. So although the novel since his day has made good its claim to be as serious a piece of lasting literature as a drama or a picture or a poem, the first English novelist is at least as great as the last, as Mr. Meredith or as Mr. Hardy.

Now Dickens in his infancy learned *TOM JONES* almost by heart, and necessarily imbibed some of the character of the author. Critics, who like to fit every author into his place in the mosaic of their theory, have condemned Dickens out of hand because he was the last of a school which had been superseded by one of higher and wider aims. As Stevenson pointed out in connection with Victor Hugo, great moral principles are part

of the tissue of modern tales. Take away the *motif*, on which all the French critics lay such stress, from *LES TRAVAILLEURS DE LA MER* and no story is left. With Dickens, though no one more deliberately and vigorously attacked standing abuses, the people are the thing. It is as if hypocrisy were invented to illustrate Mr. Pecksniff. Such an elemental creation could never have been fashioned by secondary inspiration. Chiefly for this reason all attempts to fit Dickens into an essential place in the development of fiction have been found beside the mark. His date, as well as his character, forbids it. Though he owed much to Fielding he is in no full sense of Fielding's school; and though in aim he is as simple as Mr. Meredith is complex, his work is not therefore earlier in theoretical evolution. Even with regard to Thackeray, with whom he is often unfairly compared, he is his contrary, not his contradictory, naturally different, not consciously opposed. He belongs to the immortal band of observers, the men whose observation is so keen and interest so vivid that articulate expression becomes a necessity. When the kettle boils, the steam must escape. The character, training, environment of the authors give them each individuality, but Dickens's laughable hyperbole, Thackeray's genial cynicism, Hugo's melodramatic extravagances, are individual accidents, not the inheritance of a school. Dickens, then, is neither the first nor the last of a school, though he owed much to Fielding, and has been now and then slavishly imitated by Daudet. Literary men have, from time to time, thrown off a sketch or two, as Gigadibs did, which may be mistaken for Dickens, but to keep up the effort for a hundred pages is beyond the power of imitation.

But though fortunately Dickens founded no school, his work has produced an almost unexampled effect on the humour of a whole nation. It is impossible to estimate the popularity of the novels in America, but it is certain that if he had received a penny royalty on the sale of his books there, he would have been, in spite of his generous habits, a man of vast wealth. The number of pirated editions was immense; it is no wonder that he wrote home with such bitterness of the cruelty that the want of a copyright-law entailed. He may be said to have been the first novelist whom the whole nation through all its castes read and enjoyed. He found, as he writes in one of the letters from America, even "the carmen of Hertford in their blue frocks all reading my books." Though his published impressions of America caused the deepest indignation, which was intensified by the powerful but rather unhappy chapters in *MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT*, he regained his popularity quickly for the reason that his bitterest foes had never escaped from the grip of his charm. His humour "fair whipped," as one of them said, anything they had read before; and the appreciation of it, widespread beyond precedent, had exercised an unprecedented influence on the style of the nation's humour.

No people have a form of humour so well defined as the Americans. It is not perhaps particularly admirable; it is not literary; it is certainly much inferior to the humour of Dickens's novels, but it is still descended directly, having developed certain unfortunate features, from the children of Dickens's genius. On humour in England Dickens has exercised no similar effect because the quality of the nation's humour was already individual when Dickens wrote. In some ways his humour is not particu-

larly English, or rather it exaggerated one attribute to the exclusion of others. Typical English humour, the result of Teuton solidity meeting Celtic imagination, is reticent, subtle, even, it may be, grim; it is chiefly marked, as a rule, by inward appreciation, and more often made articulate by action than by speech. A twinkle at the corner of the mouth is a more frequent sign than an epigram or a laugh. But it is well to remember that there are no clowns like the English, no such physical humourists, so to speak, who plunge into extravagant quiddities for the mere zest of tumultuous life. Dickens was a prince of clowns, and the title is commendatory. His whole person overflowed with vitality, and the fun in him came out anyhow, tricked in grotesque trappings, tumbling into ridiculous antics, grimacing, frowning, blubbering, cracking whips, turning catherine-wheels, mimicking, originating; but always it was exuberant, and in the midst of the most farcical folly betraying an almost supernatural shrewdness of observation. Such, from one isolated point of view, was Dickens's humour, and in this aspect it appealed with universal force to the American people. There existed no doubt traces of this bent of humour in the States before Dickens wrote; but his work, especially the earliest and least mature, gave an impetus to the movement by reason of which it is still hurried forward. The cardinal attribute of American humour is exaggeration. It seeks out and clings to the extravagant, heaping hyperbole on hyperbole with care to leave the grotesqueness addition to the top of the outrageous heap. The effect of the stories is always cumulative. Of those that are quotable one of the best examples is the description of the latest rifle-club, and its use was to cap any "tall" talking from visitors.

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The opening, to borrow a metaphor from the chess-board, is one commonly played by Americans. A foreigner had spoken of his nation's skill with the rifle. "That's nothing," said his host. "In America, we never think of shooting at a still target; someone just rolls a tub down-hill, and you've got to put three consecutive bullets into the bunghole before you can become a member of the club. There's a fresh trial of the members every month, and every man that misses one of his three shots has to leave the club." Then, with a pause designed to create the impression that hyperbole had reached its limit, the narrator would add, "And we haven't lost a member for four years." The incidents of the story are cumulative. By artificial extravagance, lie is heaped upon lie till altitude can be carried no further. Just the same means are adopted with considerable effect by Mark Twain in his sketch, popular at Penny Readings, of the doings and goings of his watch after he had begun to meddle with the regulator. If you are in boisterous health, you may indulge in tumults of laughter. If your mood is only receptive, not aggressive, you will find your sense of humour strained to the breaking-point. There is no middle course possible, no midway smile between appreciation and laughter.

It is a commonplace, and a particularly irritating commonplace, of criticism that Dickens is spoiled by exaggeration. Mr. Micawber, we are told, and Mark Tapley are gross caricatures. "Dickens could not draw a gentleman," as if Mr. Pickwick was ever anything else. "No man of literary perceptions can read Dickens if he has learned to appreciate Thackeray," as though Peggotty's heart were not as valuable as Becky's brain. "Dickens's pathos is a model of mock sentiment," as though even

the critics themselves in their salad-days had not suffered with Agnes and Dr. Strong. Dickens is no artist, they assure us, and the prophets prophesy, in the face of the new editions, that the Dodsons and Gamps will die forgotten as soon as manners change and abuses are scattered. Poor Dickens! When the literary man has done with him, there is nothing left but a substratum of burlesque humour, fit to please a few uncultured spirits of the middle class. Even the admirers of Dickens grant the truth of these arguments, and confess that the portraiture of the character is generally damaged by some hyperbolic attribute. There are no Quilps in real life who swallow liquid fire; hypocrites do not reach the Pecksniffian level; small Olivers do not whimper over mothers they have never known. These charges, partially accurate in the letter, are founded on a misconception; but it is true that the exaggerative and boisterous qualities of Dickens have chiefly enthralled Americans; and it is the popular misconception of Dickens's art and aim, fostered by certain critics, which has perverted throughout America the influence of Dickens's work. With a natural appreciation of extravagances, such as those they thought they had found in Dickens, American humourists, imitating consciously or unconsciously, sought to create effects, similar, for instance, to Mr. Dounce's quandary in the *SKETCHES BY BOZ*, by inventing a series of ridiculous situations. But the result has been something essentially different from anything in Dickens, because with him the occurrences are always co-ordinate emanations from a central character, with the Americans they are successive *tours de force* of the author's inventiveness. Now and

then, perhaps, in Dickens the events are grotesque and extravagant, but they are never unreal, because the characters commit just that sort of action which they should in accordance with the essential attributes of their definition. The degree of the action may be disproportionate, its quality never is. With writers, on the other hand, whose characters are produced by the events, the action is the essential part, and if the details be judged improbable or unconvincing the tale or sketch loses its justification.

We may say that Dickens never consciously set out for dramatic situation. His characters did that for him, acting as did John Inglesant on Mr. Shorthouse. "It was days," Mr. Shorthouse once said, "before I could make Inglesant travel over to Italy." Inglesant's heart was in the little village of Gidding and he refused to leave England, and it was not till after a week's wrestling that he reluctantly yielded to his author's remonstrances and crossed the channel. In the pages of the book you feel the hero's reluctance; he drags along, for the reason that his experiences were not of his own finding. The characters he created were more real to Dickens than Inglesant was to Mr. Shorthouse, and Dickens was seldom foolish enough to contradict their wishes. His method is excellently described in one of his letters to Felton: "I am in great health and spirits and powdering away at Chuzzlewit while all manner of facetiousness rises up before me as I go on." The humour rose up, the situations came: "He spoke in numbers for the numbers came." Such confessions may be made by almost every genius, and of no one is it truer than of Dickens that "he wrote because he could not help it." His characters, at least in the earlier novels, said

what they said because he could not help it. Without the help of the good lady no one, not even Dickens, could have written Mrs. Nickleby's more eloquent speeches: there is less exaggeration in the whole of her amazing orations than in a page of Mark Twain (a great humourist, we grant,) or of Mr. Jerome, who represents American humour on its way back to England. Contrast the most ludicrous passage (for instance, the slipping of the tow-rope) in Mr. Jerome's *THREE MEN IN A BOAT*, with any speech taken at haphazard from the lips of Mrs. Nickleby, and the superiority of the method of Dickens to the best efforts of American and the newest English humour will appear at once. Hers is the true oratory. Listen to her at the theatre with Sir Mulberry Hawk and his delectable companions.

"I think there must be something in the place, for, soon after I was married, I went to Stratford with poor dear Mr. Nickleby, in a post-chaise from Birmingham—was it a post-chaise though?" said Mrs. Nickleby, considering. "Yes it must have been a post-chaise, because I recollect remarking at the time that the driver had a green shade over his left eye;—in a post-chaise from Birmingham, and after we had seen Shakespeare's tomb and birthplace, we went back to the inn there, where we slept that night, and I recollect that all night long I dreamt of nothing but a black gentleman, at full length, in plaster-of-Paris, with a lay-down collar tied with two tassels, leaning against a post and thinking; and when I woke in the morning and described him to Mr. Nickleby, he said it was Shakespeare just as he had been when he was alive, which was very curious indeed. Stratford — Stratford," continued Mrs. Nickleby, considering. "Yes, I am positive about that, because I recollect I was in the family-way with my son Nicholas at the time, and I had been very much frightened by an Italian image-boy that very morning. In fact, it was quite a mercy, ma'am," added Mrs. Nickleby, in a whisper to Mrs. Witterly, "that my son didn't turn out to be a Shakespeare,

and what a dreadful thing that would have been!"

Mrs. Nickleby speaks as her definition compelled; she was forced by inward compulsion to live up to her attributes. The case is exactly reversed with a great deal of the humour that is now commended; it is either imported or reported. That is to say, facetious words or ridiculous occurrences are fetched from anywhere and this or that character compelled to say or act them, though they each would be just as funny if it were spoken or experienced by anyone else. We may take the adventures of the *Three Men in a Boat*, or of the *Invisible Man*, or even of *Huckleberry Finn*, as illustrative; the words and occurrences are imported.

Another class of humourist, who is now enjoying a vogue, laboriously studies a locality and its slang, and then invents characters and story to illustrate the entries in the notebook. Mr. Morrison, who writes picturesquely and powerfully, was greatly commended in a late review for his "easy swing of detail." He had, in a word, a large amount of notes to pick from, and he made us laugh by the accuracy of his reports. There is an undoubted laugh in the boast of the man that he had "a pair of Benjamins cut saucy with double fake-ments down the sides." The phrase we remember well, but who it was that said it we have long since forgotten. On the other hand let anyone hear such simple unremarkable words as "so disposed" or "swelling wisely," and the pictures of Mrs. Gamp or of Tony Weller rise up instantly. The mind acts on the law of association of ideas, by which, if two things are once associated together, ever afterwards the appearance of the lesser tends to suggest the greater. If the character came before the words

in the order of creation, the hearing of the words will recall the character; if the phrase was made and afterwards put into a character's mouth, we must hear of both the character and the phrase before we can recall their connection.

The causes of what we may call the degeneration of humour are reciprocal, as between author and public. There is continuous pressure on the author to supply what the public wishes, and the wishes of the public are fostered by the sort of literature which authors supply. The author may be above his public; but he is also of it, vitiated by its prejudices and inspired with its enthusiasms, and there can be no doubt that the bulk of people prefer that sort of forced wit which the admirers of Dickens deprecate. As a test of popular opinion it is illuminating to cross-examine a number of people who may be described without offence as belonging to the class of professional novel-reader. The unanimity of their criticisms will be surprising. Let Mr. Barrie, in his capacity as humourist, be taken as the subject of interrogation. Let one story, for example *THE COURTING OF T'NOWHEAD'S BELL*, be selected for illustrating our professional novel-reader's theories of humour. It will be found that at least nine out of ten will become rapturous over that detail of the story in which occurs the description of the race, as watched from the kirk gallery, between Sanders Elshioner (who took the roadway and to his eternal disgrace ran on the Sabbath) and Samuel the weaver, who tried the short cut over the burn and up the commonty. The race is described with much spirit and the details are diverting; but the essence of the story, its claim to a more than fugitive distinction, its real humour, lies in the subsequent events as displayed in the repeated conversations

between the canny Sanders and the diffident Samuel. The conclusion is quite excellent.

"Ye'll be gaein' up to the manse to arrange wi' the minister the morn's mornin'," continued Sanders in a subdued voice.

Sam'l looked wistfully at his friend. "I canna do't, Sanders," he said, "I canna do't."

"Ye maun," said Sanders.

"It's aisy to speak," retorted Sam'l bitterly.

"We have a' oor troubles, Sam'l," said Sanders soothingly, "an' every man maun bear his ain burdens. Johnnie Davie's wife's dead, and he's no repinin'."

"Ay," said Sam'l, "but a death's no a maritch; we hae ha'en deaths in oor family too."

"I maun hae langer to think o't," said Sam'l.

"Bell's maritch is the morn," said Sanders decisively.

The Scotch allusiveness and the characters of the two men are illustrated here with an exquisite touch, and in this vein Mr. Barrie would have done really good work. He is not Scott, but Sanders and Sam'l have the native charm which has helped to make Caleb Balderstone and Andrew Fairservice immortal. Sanders is a small man compared with the Olympians of Scott; but Sanders in pursuit of a wife is endowed with the real native humour not less truly than Caleb running off with the wild ducks on the spit or Andrew in the arrangement of a horse-deal. But the later Barrie! What a falling off is there! And the reason is not only that Thrums had been worked out and the store of its characters exhausted, but that popularity lay in the direction of extravagant incident, of hyper-sensitive sentiment.

There is another fault in the later humourists which is also conspicuous in many writers on other subjects, even on science. It springs in the

first place from hurry and from the poverty of thought which must result from it. Authors will not take even a vastly modified form of Horace's advice to let their work lie fallow for a time. Mr. Shorthouse did it in the case of JOHN INGLESANT; Messieurs Paul et Victor Margueritte have made a trilogy of novels the work of a lifetime; but in most cases the man who is conscious of talent exhausts his material as soon as it is acquired; he shapes out the forms of his imagination before he has learned his business. The immediate result is thinness. It is as if Dickens, having come across the abominations of a Bumble or a Squeers, had filled OLIVER TWIST and NICHOLAS NICKLEBY with their doings to the exclusion of the thieves, actors, and the rest of the immortal characters that fill the pages. Supposing, again, that Dickens had acquired such an intimate knowledge of Thames shipping as Mr. Jacobs, we should have had from him glorious chapters winking to the brim with the bubbles of humour; but to offer a brew of nothing but Thames boatmen would never have occurred to him.

A humourist, whose field should be as wide as his world, needs above all things broad observation and broad sympathy. The world is right in refusing to keep before its eyes a number of miniatures. However clever and neat, they must become wearisome and unsatisfying. We can put up with a few. Mr. Jacobs undoubtedly makes us laugh; in his vein he has genuine wit and humour, and needs only to give himself wider scope. Mr. Hope is subtle and clever beyond his classical predecessors. Mr. Anstey, on the almost irritating irony of fate working in the unimaginative medium of middle class lives, has won more than an ephemeral success; but they are all too contracted, too subtle, too

clever, too careful of means, too well bridled. They are infinitely superior to most of their farcical contemporaries who must be always sticking spurs into jaded nature, that she may seem, at any rate to the gallery, to be gambolling naturally; but something bigger is wanted, a man before whom "all manner of facetiousness will rise up" as he writes. He will not come while men are content to spread their stuff thin, and to write before they have realised. In spite of his many deficiencies the one exception is Mr. Kipling. He is real; he speaks that he knows; his humour is inherent and plain-spoken; Mulvaney is and the drummer-boys of the Fore and Aft *were*. His imagination is actual on whatever subject it works.

When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre
'E'd 'eard men sing by land and sea;
An' what 'e thought 'e might require
'E wen' and took, the same as me.

This is the true historical imagination, which working on things past or present sees for itself without straining and without distortion. Even so free from hypocrisy was Dickens, and the modern novelist and the modern humourist both need a full dose of him. The Americans have only copied his extravagances and, if we may allow the criticism, his want of style. The English humourists have either taken a sort of tertiary inspiration through the Americans, or have mistaken the humour of situations for the humour of character and the product of the mere intellect for the expression of character. We are told that Dickens is about to go out of favour. The consummation will only be reached when the sense of humour is destroyed either by the dilettante affectations of professional word-catchers or the overwhelming flood of paragraphic facetiousness.

THE LAND OF THE POPPY.

IV.—ITS RIVER-LIFE.

SARJU is a name common to several rivers in a certain district of Poppy Land. In order therefore to distinguish one Sarju from another it is necessary to prefix an adjective before the name. The river of which I speak, and on whose green banks I have spent so many happy hours, is the Chota Sarju, which translated into the English tongue means the Lesser Sarju. The Chota Sarju is in reality the off-scourings of a much larger river, the course of which was artificially diverted into an old channel which joins another river known as the Koriala. This diverted stream is now called the Sarju, and the surplus water that flows a mile past the station of Bahraich is the one known as the Chota Sarju. The head waters of the stream are in the hills of Nepaul, and the river is consequently liable to floods which usually occur at the commencement of and during the rainy season. A mile from the cluster of bungalows and the crowded bazaar, that rejoices in the name of Bahraich, a small pontoon bridge has been thrown across the stream.

River crossings or fords are known in India as *ghâts*, and the place where the pontoon bridge has been constructed is called Golwa Ghât. Fifty yards above the pontoons the abutments of a masonry bridge are still standing, the silent monuments of an engineering mistake. The bridge was apparently not built with sufficient water-escape, and when the river rose in its wrath the arches came down like a house of cards, and no attempt

has been made to rebuild it. Between the ruined abutments and the pontoon bridge the river widens into a deep pool or *khund*. To the south of this there is another shallower pool joined to the larger one by a narrow channel. Looking up the river from the foot of the ruins, the scene is a strikingly beautiful one. The river winds through a broad green plain, covered with feathery grasses and dotted with clumps and groves of handsome trees. Above everything is the glorious sky of Bahraich. The sunsets here would fill the heart of an artist with rejoicing and despair, with delight at the indescribable cloud-effects and glowing lights, with despair at the thought of having to reproduce by means of such coarse mediums as paint and canvas the glorious tints that greet his eyes.

The fishes of the Chota Sarju may be broadly divided into vegetable feeders and those that require animal food. The vegetable feeders belong to the families of Indian carp and trout, and may be distinguished by their scaly bodies, tough leathery lips, and small mouths. The flesh-eaters are predaceous in their habits, and have mostly large flat heads, with wide jaws armed with numerous teeth. Their bodies are clothed with a tough pliant skin generally of a silver colour on the sides and a greyish green on the back and head. They are most of them repulsive-looking creatures, but some afford fairly good sport with rod and line.

Chief among these aquatic highwaymen is the *parhin*, a voracious feeder and relentless destroyer of the young carp and trout. The dental armament of this fish is particularly formidable, and it must be seen to be properly understood. The head of one of these fierce creatures lies before me as I write. It is ten inches in length, and of this the jaws occupy five inches, the under jaw protruding a little beyond the upper. The teeth, looking like small ivory pins, are arranged in a dense belt about an inch broad in both jaws, and are countless in number. It would be thought that this apparatus would be enough to ensure the capture of the slipperiest of the long-nosed eels that wriggle in the mud at the bottom of the river; but the destruction of the *parhin's* victim is rendered still more certain by clusters of teeth arranged on his palate. The eye-sockets are high up on the sides of the flattened head, and are thus placed because the wily creature conceals itself in the mud, or in a dense patch of weeds, and awaits there the approach of some unwary victim on which it darts with relentless fury, eyes glaring, whiskers outstretched, and jaws wide open, the incarnation of hideous gluttony.

The saw-like action of the *parhin's* jaws is often too much for ordinary gut, and if there is a really large one about a few strands of fine wire are often used instead. The *parhin* makes a grand rush when struck, but after that one desperate plunge for freedom, his courage often oozes out of him, and the coward comes passively to land staring stupidly at the strange world into which he is hauled only to be instantly executed. The death of a *parhin* is looked upon by all anglers as an act of retributive justice; hence none are spared when caught, and even a baby *parhin* is

destroyed with as much gusto as the patriarch of the family. The flesh of this fish is coarse and muddy. But on this, as on all other points, tastes differ, and partisans are not wanting who declare that the *parhin* properly smoked over a fire of sugarcane-sticks becomes a dish fit to set before a king. Native fishermen will accept the brute gratefully, considering him a delicacy even without the aid of sugarcane and smoke.

Another member of the criminal tribes of fishes, that may be found lurking in the mud, in dark holes, or under the shadows of the pontoons, ready to destroy the unwary *rohu* or *naini* that may approach it, is the *gunch* or *Bagarius Yarrelli* of naturalists. This fish is the one commonly known as the fresh-water shark. It is clothed with a thick leathery skin, blotched with black and flesh colour, the head flattened, and as usual the upper jaw is furnished with two long feelers. The jaws have a powerful armament of teeth. The *gunch* is not very common in the Chota Sarju, and I have not heard of any very large ones having been caught here. In other rivers it runs very large, often to as much as a hundred pounds. It has been harpooned, and if the harpoon used be sufficiently light the sport, it is said, becomes exciting.

These two fish may in a popular way be described as river-sharks, but there are several other predatory fish of smaller size and strength. One of the most numerous of these is the *mohi*.

The *mohi* may frequently be seen rising to the surface of the water, taking a mouthful of air, and diving straight down again, showing as it does so a broad gleam of silver. It attains to a considerable size, often reaching three or four feet in length, and weighing from twenty to thirty pounds. Its configuration viewed

sideways is peculiar. The shoulders rise in a great hump over the long flat head, and then curve gently down to the tail. The body is compressed and flattened. A *mohi* that would measure about four inches across the back at the broadest part might be about fifteen inches from dorsal to ventral fin. The dorsal fin is prolonged until it meets the tail to which it is united, and the tail fin is not forked as in the carp family. The *mohi* affords fairly good sport with rod and line in March and April, and will take worms freely; another favourite bait is the *chilwa*, a species of small fish with which the river teems.

The success that attends the efforts of the country angler armed with his rude implements, must be attributed to his thorough knowledge of the habits of the fishes to be found in the rivers and lakes of the district in which he lives. He will saunter up to the river-side where you have been spending hours unsuccessfully, armed with the best apparatus obtainable in the country, bringing with him a stout bamboo that looks more adapted for a barge-pole than a fishing-rod. Nevertheless, it is his fishing-rod, and to one end of it he has fastened a coarse black line, from which, without any intervening gut or gimp, dangles a large iron hook. His float is a piece of the thick dry stalk of the *sarpai* grass, called in this state a *senta*. It is about a foot long, and lies flat on the water. He deftly baits his hook with about six live *chilwas*, throws out his line and squats on his haunches, shading his eyes with one hand, while with the other he keeps a light touch on the pole. In ten minutes his float is hopping merrily. He waits till it has quite disappeared, makes a strong stroke with the inflexible pole, and with a grunt of satisfaction proceeds

to deliberately haul up a vast silver *mohi*. Slinging his twenty pounds of fish over his shoulder he trots home contentedly in the shades of the evening, humming nasally the refrain of a country song, "*Ye dunniya jaisa ek sarai* (This world is but an inn to rest awhile)," which is not inappropriate to the fish's career in the generous waters of the Chota Sarju.

The particular antipathy of all fishermen in these waters is the *tengan*. This fish is as tantalising to the angler as the brahminy duck and the peewit are to the gunner. He has no scales, being clothed in a tough skin like his other predatory relatives; but he differs from them in having a round smallish mouth with thick leathery lips, and his teeth, if he has any, are in his palate. His pectoral and dorsal fins are armed with sharp spines, and with these he often wounds the finger of any one who, ignorant of his powerful weapons, attempts to disgorge a hook he has taken.

His mouth in common with his tribe is furnished with feelers,—two long and two short ones—and when landed he often emits a doleful squeaking sound. The greed of this fish is phenomenal; he spares no bait, be it *chilwa*, worm, or paste, and calmly appropriates the most tempting collations that have been spread with a view of attracting his betters. While he is feeding the carp keep aloof, not seeming to care for his society. It is easy to tell when he is at work, for he keeps up an annoying feeble tugging at the bait, and every now and then draws the float quite under water in his attempts to carry the booty to his den to devour it at leisure. As cunning as he is greedy he eludes stroke after stroke. Times without number he will clean the hook, until the angler wearied and disgusted quits the spot for some other

swim where he devoutly hopes there are no *tengans*. The best plan is to leave the brute to his own devices and let him drag the bait about as much as he likes, when he will probably end by hooking himself. Feeling some slight resistance as he circles ever deeper and deeper towards the mud the *tengan* fears the tempting morsel, held gingerly in his tough lips, will escape him. He makes a violent effort, and succeeds in swallowing the bait. On pulling up the line he will be found dangling at the end, often with the barb of the hook driven through his head. The greedy wretch may then be put out of pain at once, and the angler will find it has paid him to have devoted some time to the destruction of this pest.

The river is going down now, and Karim Bakhsh, that pearl of fishermen, has come to tell us that the weary days of waiting are over, and the vanguard of the fish has arrived. All through the rains the waters of the river have been turbulent and muddy, and the fish have been spawning in the shallow reaches higher up. Our rods and lines have lain idle in our rooms, while we ourselves have often gone down to the *ghât* to watch the silver-sided *mohi* rolling in the discoloured flood. But now the water is clearing and falling, and as we jump from the dog-cart and hurry to the canoe waiting among the bulrushes and duckweed at the river's brink, we can see the *rohu* leaping, and visions of lusty twenty-pounders dance before our eyes.

The Chota Sarju has its peculiarities, and one of them is that its fish will not take a fly. Bottom-fishing is the order of the day, and though good results may be obtained with the rod and line, the best bags are made with the hand-line. The bait used is chiefly earth-worms, but

there are certain fish that may be caught with paste made of flour.

Karim Bakhsh is at the river-side. He has been there since morning, and it is now two o'clock in the afternoon. He has made a little mud-platform to sit on, and fastened up a large umbrella over it. Rod and line are not to his mind. He has two hand-lines made in the local bazaar and rendered waterproof by the frequent application of the pulp of the berries of the ebony-tree. Two iron hooks, that he tells you with pride have come from Gorakhpur, are fastened near the end of each line, while at the extremity of each is a lead sinker of pyramidal shape, weighing about two ounces. On the ground beside him is a small earthen pot, in which his bait, a mass of lively earth-worms, are crawling about in some wet mud, and in front of him are two split sticks, in the clefts of which he fixes his lines after making a cast.

Karim Bakhsh has the patience of a heron and knows that in the waters of the Chota Sarju this inestimable virtue, together with a hand-line, will produce the most sport. Instead of a landing-net he carries a small gaff shaped like a pick-axe, and an iron ring with a number of large iron hooks fastened to it. This curious looking instrument he fastens to a piece of fine strong rope and employs to disentangle his line from the weeds that grow luxuriantly in the shallow water close to the bank. A small peg has been driven into the ground close to the water's edge some feet to his left, and from this a stout piece of twine leads into the water. "What is all this, Karim Bakhsh?" we ask. For answer he pulls at the twine, and from the black depths of the water a number of ruddy-tinted fish slowly rise to the surface.

Several large carp of various species, weighing from three to ten pounds

each, are threaded on this line. They are all alive, and it is Karim Bakhsh's simple if barbarous method of keeping his captures fresh. The catch is worth examining. There are a couple of lusty carp, with a reddish tinge on each scale, called *besra*, three or four with pure silvery scales and greenish backs known as *naini*, and one with a black back and grey sides to which he gives the name of *keunchi*; but there are no *rohus* or red carp proper. We take up our rods, but Karim Bakhsh intercepts us with a deprecating shake of his head, and the assurance that they are not of much use yet, and that the hand-line alone will give us sport. So we lay our rods down again with a sigh of resignation, and taking up the hand-lines essay a cast. The sinker gleams for a moment in the sun, then falls with a splash into the hurrying water, and is carried away a short distance by the force of the current.

As soon as it touches bottom the line slackens, and we haul in until there is just sufficient tension to let us know what is happening in those mysterious depths below. Five minutes elapse and the line shows no signs of approach by hungry *besra* or coy *naini*. Suddenly a thrill runs up it, a message sent unwittingly along the cable by a wary *naini* that is now reconnoitring the tempting lunch we have spread for him. Two sharp tugs follow the thrill, and then suddenly the line tautens. A deft backward jerk with the right hand fixes the hook firmly in the tough lips of the white carp who darts away filled with a sudden apprehension that all is not as it should be with that tempting lunch. After one or two futile attempts to shake himself free he gives in, and the line comes up hand over hand, and falls in glistening coils at our feet till a gleam in the water tells that the fish is close to the surface.

Suddenly it seems to dawn upon him afresh that he is in danger. The state of bewildered alarm in which he has been sunk for the last few moments gives way to a sensation of frantic terror, and he makes another desperate struggle to regain the black depths from which he has been so ruthlessly dragged. And so we fight it out, foot by foot, until the landing-net descends softly under him, and rises the next instant with a fine five pound *naini* gasping in its meshes.

Karim Bakhsh, seated by our side, initiates us into the secrets of the various bites. He understands the telegraphic code of the Chota Sarju fishes, and declares at once who the unwitting signaller is.

Now a series of sharp tugs follow in rapid succession, making the line quiver and jar against the index finger of the right hand. "It is nothing," says Karim Bakhsh, "it is nothing; the small fry are at the bait; haul in, *sahib*, and bait your hooks again, for even now they have been cleaned." As he speaks the line falls slack and limp on the water's surface. We haul up, and find our hooks innocent of bait. Karim Bakhsh looks out a particularly attractive worm from his collection in the earthen pot, and fixes it on the hooks, and the lead flies out once more with the wriggling invitation to the carps as they browse placidly on the weeds in their favourite feeding-place.

This time there is no hesitation; two or three long and strong pulls end in a tautening of the line. "Strike, *sahib*, strike," exclaims Karim in an excited whisper, and the next moment we are in the thick of a fight with a burly red carp (*rohu*). After this there is a long interval during which there is no sign but the annoying twitching of small fish. Yet all around the line

the water is alive with big fellows,— splash, splash on each side, and the swirl and bubbles tell us that they are all there; why then will they not bite? It seems inexplicable and certainly is very tantalising. Karim Bakhsh says: "*Sahib, machi ki agai hai* (Sir, this is but the vanguard of the fish)." The explanation has to be taken for what it is worth; but it is at least evident that the fish have for the time given up feeding, and we must draw upon our reserves of patience.

Lighting a cigar I lean back on one elbow and watch the teeming life in the shallow water at my feet, while my companion strolls a hundred yards down the bank to try his luck with a rod.

The bank slopes very gently for some distance under the water, and then takes a sudden dip, and the water, which up to this point has been as transparent as crystal, as suddenly becomes a greenish brown mass whose depths are impenetrable to the sight.

From these gloomy depths a number of elegant little fish suddenly make their appearance in the lighted shallows. Their bodies, which are long and tapering, are light green, showing now and then a gleam of silver as they turn in the light, and their snouts are elongated to such an extent that they resemble miniature sword-fish in appearance. They move with great rapidity, now and then stopping a moment to bask in the glorious warmth, facing up stream the whole time, and never seeming to eat anything. So delicate and graceful are they that the sight of them calls up visions of grottoes in the sea, and they seem to want a background of corals and other zoophytes to show their beauty to perfection. Yet catch one and examine it, and its delicate tapering

jaws will be found to be armed with a row of pointed fang-like teeth, resembling in miniature the teeth of the *gharial*. This delicate little creature is known as the *kawa* by the natives. Close to the edge of the bank and quite on the surface of the water swims a tiny little fish with a round gleaming plate of what looks like mother-o'-pearl on his head. The natives call him *chandaia* or the moon-fish. He is not an inch in length, but moves his fins with an easy grace and languor as if conscious of his distinguished appearance. Suddenly a cloud of mud rises up from the russet carpet, and as it settles one can see that the *guraya*, or murrel, has emerged from its ambush to make a dash at a tiny little creature whose silver sides are beautifully mottled with black. There is a flash of silver across the golden light, and the tiny fish has escaped into the dark depths beyond, while the murrel sneaks along to another hiding-place.

But all this while the fish have not been biting, although their leaping and splashing are as vigorous as ever. Suddenly a dark object appears in the middle of the pool, an object that looks very much like a bit of drift-wood.

If it is drift-wood it appears to make some unaccountable movements. A moment more and the mystery is explained, and the head and shoulders of a ten-foot *gharial* rise above the water. The *gharial* is the fish-eating crocodile of India and is distinguishable from ordinary crocodiles by its long and slender jaws, which in the case of the male are ornamented with a boss or tubercle at the end. The appearance of this most unwelcome visitor explains the lively movements of the fish and their disinclination to feed. The monster has caught sight of us in the few mo-

ments for which he thrust his sinister head out of the water, and has sunk noiselessly into the depths, leaving a momentarily vanishing swirl to show where he had been floating. In the meantime my friend has joined me, and snatching up his rifle runs a hundred yards up stream, the direction in which the *gharial* seems to be moving, while I, who have no rifle, remain where I am, watching the stream for any further signs of the poacher. Karim Bakhsh mutters curses on the intruder, and we all long for the death of the brute that has completely spoilt the day's sport. For some time he shows no signs of coming to the surface again till in the most unexpected manner, and not twenty yards from where I sit, he rises noiselessly and floats for a minute or so taking stock of the angry faces gazing at him. Before my friend can retrace his steps the crocodile has disappeared again. The baffled sportsman now creeps back along the bank, one eye fixed on the river and the other watching for treacherous holes, of which there are many hidden under the thick grass. After a long crawl he sights the *gharial*, again this time swimming on the surface, and apparently determined to make his escape. There is no time to be lost, and with a spurt that does his sixteen stone of solid flesh great credit the hunter manages to get within range. But the quarry has seen or heard him, and as he raises the rifle to his shoulder it subsides in the midst of whirling eddies and is seen no more that day.

The evening is now closing rapidly into the short twilight of the tropics, and it is too late now to hope for any more sport with the *besras* and *nainis*. We embark in the canoe once more, and are poled across the stream in

the direction of the pontoon bridge. Jumping out we make our way up the bridge, and peer at the darkling waters around the pontoons. Here a fish every now and then rises quietly to the surface, and swims around as if questing for food. It is furnished with two long and two short whiskers or feelers on the upper jaw, and four small barbels on the lower jaw. The two long feelers are extended before it as it moves, and are slowly waved from side to side causing curious half circles on the water. This is the *baikri*; it is not often caught above three or four pounds' weight, but it is delicious eating, is very game, and affords good sport at dusk and in the early hours of the morning. In many places it will take a fly, preferring a large white-winged one with a red or yellow body, but here it is best caught with paste made of flour and water. That is soon ready, and we make a cast where a slight purl in the water betokens the presence of a hungry *baikri*. When on the feed he is bold and fearless, and the bait has scarcely time to sink before it is seized and the sensation of a vigorous tug, so delightful to the angler worn out with waiting for perverse fishes to change their minds, comes trembling down the rod. A quick stroke drives the hook home, and the *baikri* with an angry shake of his head makes for the bottom. But he is soon checked, and in the next few minutes is gasping out his life at our feet. A few more rapid casts with varying success and the sport is over. Darkness has settled over the scene, and with darkness has come a silence that is accentuated by the metallic clicking of our reels as we roll up our lines and turn to leave the stream.

G. A. LEVETT-YEATA.

GOLF.

(THE MAN AND THE BOOK).

THERE are as many ways of playing golf as of constructing tribal lays, and every single one of them is right. In the brave days of old, before Colonel Bogey invaded the land, when the monthly medal was yet unknown, when golf was happy in having no history, no bibliography of which to boast, it mattered nothing whether a man drove off the right leg or off the left, whether he took his club back slow or fast, whether his elbow at the top of the swing came above his shoulder or below. Tom Morris, Alan Robertson, and other heroes of old played by the light of nature with almost as many methods as there were men, and surely they played the game.

But the volume on Golf in the Badminton Library and the bibliography of which it was the pioneer, have changed all that. Golf ceased to be a pastime, and became a science with its postulates, its axioms, its formulas. Every stroke was reduced to a dead uniformity of execution. A perfect Deuteronomy of commandments was declared: Thou shalt not do this, and that; and thus far shalt thou go and no further. The most minute directions were given for an endless number of movements and positions necessary for each separate stroke. Wrist, elbow, head, shoulders, feet had to be in a definite place at a definite moment. One was reminded of the old drill-books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with their forty or so words of command in place of the modern *Ready, Present, Fire*. How many a good golfer

solemnly and seriously read the Badminton book, and was plunged into a sudden Avernus of bunkers and despair, from which it took him many a weary month to recover. To win one's way from a bunker of sand is no easy task, but where is the niblick that will free the despondent golfer from the bunkers of despair?

The Badminton Library bears a great burden of responsibility. It seemed at first such a pleasant and useful task to pore over scientific theories of a game by night with a view to putting them into practice on the following day. It is not everyone who can read a book of this type with the equanimity of the late Mr. Palmer of Dirleton, a typical Scotch dominie, and a typical golfer of the old school. In his younger days, some forty years or so ago, he and his son could match any two players in the south of Scotland; but when one of the younger generation presented him with the Badminton book on Golf, he was old enough to refrain from taking it seriously. As a good Presbyterian he was fond of describing it as the Thirty-nine Articles of Golf. To the end the old man did his round a day, and when he sent a topped shot off the tee would say to the donor of the book, with a twinkle in his eye, "Bless ma soul, if a didna forget rule 27 for driving!"

Not every one, however, can treat this literature with so light a heart, and if at times the experienced player is distracted by it, what of the poor

beginner? The new golfer, knowing nothing of theories or of the game, after a successful preliminary putt with an umbrella, has a golf-stick, as he styles it, thrust into his hands and proceeds to address the ball in the most hap-hazard style. With his first shot he may miss altogether, but the chances are that his second is a fine though erratic drive, and in cheerful innocence he may play a reckless dashing round with many a mistake, but for all that a round full of hope and promise. Then nothing can preserve him from the advice of his friends. One tells him to put his right foot forward, another his left; one tells him to grip more with his right hand, another with his left hand, and so forth. But the fatal moment is when some misguided, though well-meaning, friend lends him the Badminton book on Golf.

Along with this book he probably studies instantaneous photographs in the *BOOK OF GOLFERS* or in his weekly *GOLF ILLUSTRATED*, which makes a special feature of instruction by illustration. Now there is nothing more absolutely misleading than an instantaneous photograph. The photograph shows not the complete action, but merely an arrested moment of the whole. No one would imagine that a trotting horse has at any moment one leg stiff as a poker on the ground and the other three in the air. Yet such is indisputably the case; and just as it is impossible to get from photographs a proper impression of how a horse trots, so it is impossible to learn how to drive from studying an instantaneous photograph of Vardon or Braid at some instant of their swing. The victim of golf-literature looks at six photographs of professionals driving and will tell you that, "There isn't a man in the Club who has his left leg absolutely straight

like that at the top of the swing." He forgets that the human eye sees things differently from the camera. The camera depicts an isolated instant, whereas the eye takes in a coherent impression of the entire action.

The cheapness of reproducing photographs is responsible for much of the modern making of books, from illustrated periodicals to Jubilee books of games. For what applies to golf applies equally to cricket and other sports. The game is treated as a science instead of a pastime, and the instantaneous photograph is employed as a method of instruction. The beginner, or indeed the practised player, can learn nothing from an impossible picture of Mr. Ranjitsinhji executing his famous glancing stroke with bat held perpendicularly in front of his silk-clad breast. If we must have instruction by illustration let it be by means of the cinematograph, which would at least display the entire action involved in each stroke. A cinematograph showing the final round of the Championship at St. Andrews, or an innings of a hundred runs by Mr. Fry, would be a really instructive and popular entertainment for a winter's night at a golf or cricket club. The single photograph is useless, but the public is only a grown-up child that still wants its picture-books; and now that process-plates from photographs are so much more speedily and cheaply produced than drawings, publishers are only too ready to gratify the popular taste. It must be noted, however, that even the modern draughtsman has fallen under the evil influence of the instantaneous photograph. You will see, especially in the best of the American magazines, horses drawn in eccentric attitudes absolutely unknown to the human eye, with the

result that the poor brutes look as if they were in a fit of the staggers rather than galloping. The old convention of drawing the galloping horse with its legs spread wide out, however false it may have been, was far more satisfactory and convincing to the eye. Even the Royal Academy in its Students' Competition a year ago awarded its first prize to a picture of Ladas falling dead as he goes to receive the crown of victory. The dropping figure of the athlete might well have been from a snap-shot, but worse than this was the fact that the wreath was actually shown suspended in mid air as it fell from the judge's hand to the ground. To such an extent is our national art degraded.

To return to the golfer, it is surely no wonder that under the influence of literature and photographs he becomes a man of theory. Always playing by the book he rarely makes a natural stroke. He fidgets about as he addresses the ball, seeing an imaginary diagram on the ground. He takes his club stiffly and slowly back, probably stops at the top of his swing, and then wonders if the ball goes off at a tangent to the right. What is worse, he often becomes a bore. To sum up his character after the manner of Theophrastus :

Your theoretical golfer is he whose much reading hath made him somewhat mad. He weareth a frown, and also talketh no little both of himself and of golf. After he hath played three rounds of the links he will set down seven balls some fifty yards from the home green, and strive, not without difficulty, to understand for what reason he failed to play even such a shot at the thirteenth and at other greens. In this way having cut much turf he will go homewards and cut also his drawing-room carpet, and will make trial of twelve new irons and mashies with which Taylor and other men can play approach-shots in deed and

not in word. His handicap is 15, and both on other occasions and when he imbibeth tea with three scratch players and a plus 4 man will he expound the only correct method of playing a half-iron shot, of putting due cut upon a ball, and similar things.

Now if such is the effect of too much theory, how is the helpless beginner or the mature player, who is "off his game," to find salvation? The answer lies in the word *imitation*, the *μίμησις* which Aristotle laid down as the basis of all artistic production. It is a primitive and savage instinct, this of imitation, but even in these civilised days it plays no unimportant part in our lives. You see it displayed in a hundred ways. Look at a small child with her little frock scarcely below her knees, and watch with what an air she gathers it up to cross a muddy road, in unconscious imitation of her elders. Look at a lady who stands watching the dancers in a ball-room, and note the slight sway of the body, the quick movement of the foot. Or watch the finish of the high jump at any athletic sports, and mark how among the mass of the spectators there is a lift of the foot and a heave of the head, as the jumper rises from the ground. Even in the stalls of a London theatre, in spite of the apathy and self-control of modern society, you will sometimes see this primitive instinct intruding itself, merely a frown on someone's brow, a tightened fist, a movement of the hand, a tear in an eye.

Now the way to learn golf is to forget yourself and your theories, and to give free flight to this natural instinct of imitation. Play, when you can, with some one better than yourself, and absorb his style just as the child absorbs the grace with which her elder sister gathers up her skirts. If your partner be a first-rate player, do not stand with a scowl wondering

why you were such a fool as to waste eight strokes on the last hole. Watch instead the certainty with which he takes his position. There is no fidgeting with the feet, the few inches this way or that make no fatal difference. Watch his easy swing; watch how his eye remains fixed upon the ball; above all, watch his "follow through." Absorb the human being, and not the book. Give free play to the instinct of imitation, and you are on the road to success.

You may go through much tribulation, but the best of it is that to all alike, good player or bad, the game still has its fascination. *Non omnia possumus omnes*,—we cannot all go round under eighty strokes,—but good and bad, old and young, each in his own way can play the game. It was my fortune recently to be standing near an elderly gentleman who was playing with his daughter. The old man was slow and deliberate in every movement, and some players behind were obviously fretting at the delay he caused. The daughter ventured to suggest to her father that they should give up the hole and pass on to the next tee. "Give up the hole!" was the indignant reply, "I'll do nothing of the sort; I've only played *thirteen*!" Nor need there be any distinction, such as was made by a green-keeper in Scotland, who was asked one day recently how many people were out playing. His reply was: "There's juist twa gowfers and three meenisters here the day."

For one and all, good player and bad, old and young, minister or layman, there is the charm of the fresh air and exercise that the game entails. The dweller in cities can forget the weariness, the fever and the fret of business life. Surely it is with pure delight, all unalloyed with party spirit, that the politician surveys the cheerful landscape of Tooting Bec with his opponent of the opposite bench two down and one to play in the foreground. The world has no cares for the man who is "dormie two" with a blue sky overhead, the green links beneath his foot, and the sound of the sea in his ears. One can appreciate the impassioned cry coming straight from a Scotchman's heart:

O it's terrible lang sin syne
Since I had a sicht o' the sea,
An' I'm wearyin' sair for a roun'
O' the links i' the North Countree.

O I'm wearyin' sair for a roun'
On the links o' my ain countree,
For the bunkers o' saun' and the lone
green lan',
An' the soun' an' the smell o' the
sea.

One and all may know this delight, and one and all may strive after that perfection which has been granted to one or two alone, to Vardon perhaps in the highest degree, a perfection that never will be attained by the working out of theories or the establishment of golf among the exact sciences. Golf is an instinct, an inspiration, an art.

MARTIN HARDIE.

DINNERS AND DINERS.¹

THE art of dining has never lacked criticism or panegyric. Poets have sung its praises, philosophers have analysed its pleasures. The famous banquets of the world are as familiar to us as the famous battles, and when the erudite Johannes Stuckius set out to compose his treatise *DE ANTIQVORVM CONVIVIIS* he assuredly did not lack material. Already the subject had engrossed the profound intellect of Plutarch; already Athenæus, the king of pedants, had obscured the gay science with ill-digested knowledge; and the whole literature of the ancients had been ransacked for the lightest allusion to the cooking of meat, upon which the life of man still depends. Meanwhile the art of cookery was remade, following through all the centuries the style and taste which governed the other arts. Barbarous in the Gothic age, it took on a new refinement with the Renaissance, and from Louis the Fourteenth to the Revolution it followed the lines of splendour and restraint which controlled the chairs and tables of the feast.

Nor did its literature decline with the years. Eloquence grew with ingenuity, and a larger library was devoted to cooking than to all the other arts together. Brillat-Savarin was the first of the moderns to treat the subject with a proper deference. Now, he was gifted with the two qualities of gay philosophy and grave enthusiasm most necessary to the

critic of the table. He offered no foolish excuse for the most legitimate of pleasures, but discoursed of dining as though it were the first duty of the wise. "The Creator," said he, "in compelling man to eat that he may live, invites him to the feast by appetite, and rewards him by pleasure." Thus he wrote with the playful seriousness of his time, making epigrams spiced with truth, as a leg of mutton should be spiced with garlic, and touching upon first principles with the lightest of light fingers. That the discovery of a new dish confers a greater happiness upon the human race than the discovery of a new star seems a paradox, but it is the simple statement of a fact. At any rate M. Brillat-Savarin approached the kitchen in a spirit of reverence, and if his treatise is not a sternly practical guide, at least it teaches us how to dine like philosophers.

Brillat-Savarin somewhere confesses that in the use of words he was a Romantic. It amused him, he said, to uncover hidden treasures; yet where his own art was concerned he preached a gospel of stern classicism. Presently indeed, the romantic movement was to exercise a baneful influence upon the table, substituting orgies for dinners, and inventing dishes, strange and incongruous as Gautier's waistcoats or as the furniture of Gerald de Nerval. Read Dumas's treatise, for instance, and you will note the vices of gluttony and extravagance. But taste returned to the paths of sanity, and Byzantine though our age has been styled, at any rate it insists on

¹ *DINNERS AND DINERS*; by Colonel Newnham-Davis: a new, enlarged, and revised edition. London, 1901.

dining with restraint, and believes with Brillat-Savarin that those who permit themselves indigestion or drunkenness know neither how to eat nor how to drink.

Nevertheless he is a bold man who to-day instructs his fellows where and how they shall dine. Though we all eat, a sort of cant persuades too many of us to preserve a silence concerning the pleasures of the table. The cant, of course, pretends to find a justification in the sin of gluttony, but no pleasure deserves condemnation because it may be abused. The vulgar man delights in jewels, chains, and gaudy ties, but his excesses are no reproach to him who is careful to dress himself like a gentleman; and as the over-dressed rascal is to the dandy, so is the glutton to him who dines with a wise moderation. But we would not in our admiration of a well-composed dinner find the smallest excuse for the glutton who gorges when he should dine. Gluttony, both in practice and effect, is the most sordid of the vices, and while he who indulges therein is a dull companion, he presently assumes the size and habit of the hog. Useless to his friends, since he knows not geniality, the glutton speedily becomes a torment to himself. "As a lamp is choked with a multitude of oil," wrote a philosopher many years ago, "or a little fire with overmuch wood quite extinguished, so is the natural heat with immoderate eating strangled in the body." But it is not of the glutton that we would write; we merely recall him because his existence has brought discredit upon a delicate art, and because we would give Colonel Newnham-Davis, whose *DINNERS AND DINERS* is composed with a proper enthusiasm, credit not only for knowledge but for courage as well.

Colonel Davis, then, is more of

a guide than of a philosopher. He prefers practice to theory, and if we follow him through the mazes of London, we may now and again dine indifferently, but we need never spend a dull evening. In London, truly, there are many methods of dining, and many prices. On the one hand is the simple chop, cooked to a turn upon a visible grill; on the other is a dinner, designed by Joseph or Paillard, which could not be excelled upon the boulevards. Yet every man, with a guinea or two in his pocket, cannot dine. He must be shepherded to the proper place, and he must be taught to order, or at least to control the ordering, of a dinner. And here it is that Colonel Davis comes to his aid, not with the philosophy of Brillat-Savarin, but with practical counsel and sound information. To order a dinner is as difficult a task as man is ever called upon to perform; and yet he who shrinks from the task has no right to entertain a guest. "To eat a *table d'hôte* dinner," says the Colonel, "is like landing a fish which has been hooked and played by somebody else;" and we quite agree with him.

Yet when the novice faces the *maitre d'hôtel*, how shall he conduct himself? The dishes which go to make up a dinner are so few, the choice is so narrow, that the giver of the feast must be ingenious indeed if he would give a personal touch to his performance. The conditions of the game exclude a wild originality, and originality is always easier to compass than a new arrangement of existing materials. The questions that suggest themselves are endless. What shall be the *hors d'œuvre*,—caviar or oysters? That depends on an infinity of considerations,—the time of year, the dishes which follow, the temperament of the

guests, and what not. But it is the very difficulty of the problem which makes it worth solving. Again, suppose yourself confronted by the manager of a restaurant, and asked what soup you will choose. Does not the beginner feel shamed into saying, "I will leave it all to you"? Yet if he say so, he will never give a dinner worthy himself or his friend. The difficulty, of course, is not insuperable. If the natural gift be there, practice may speedily bring it out, especially when the practice is guided by the wisdom of so highly accomplished a mentor as Colonel Davis. Yet now and again we are inclined to differ from him. He is never tired of condemning such simple soups as *petite marmite* or *croûte au pot*. He finds them, says he, in every bill of fare, and he sternly reproves the lack of imagination which prefers these homely soups to something stranger and more elegant. But it is not lack of imagination which chooses the simplest soups. For it is in them that fancy may most eloquently be expressed. The more simple the soup, the harder is it to make, and only the greatest cook can compose a distinguished *croûte au pot*, as only the greatest poets can fittingly express the commonplace. Nor is Colonel Davis supported by M. Joseph, the real hero of his book, since we note with pleasure that when this artist designed a little dinner at the Savoy, he opened it with a soup somewhat recklessly censured by his client.

The truth is that a soup, like the exordium of a speech, should be scrupulously quiet. No cook (nor any orator) desires to reach his climax at the outset, and for this reason *bisque* is apt to spoil a delicate repast. Excellent in itself, it does not always harmonise with what follows, and often exhausts the palate, as an

epigram in the first phrase robs a speech's peroration of its due effect. Indeed, the perfect dinner is an assemblage of dishes, each of which leads imperceptibly to what comes after, and it is clear that the art of the diner, like all the other arts, depends for perfection upon appropriateness and simplicity. To follow a *bisque* by a lobster, or a *chateaubriand* by a woodcock, is as violent a fault of taste as a lapse in grammar. Yet simplicity is a greater virtue even than appropriateness, and simplicity never found a more zealous champion than Colonel Davis. He upholds it for our admiration on every page, and better still he quotes in support the opinion of M. Joseph, than whom Europe holds no sounder authority. Now M. Joseph believes, with the elder Pliny, that many dishes bring many diseases. "In England you taste your dinners," says the incomparable artist, "you do not eat them. The artist who is confident of his art only puts a small dinner before his clients. It is a bad workman, who slurs over his failures by giving many dishes." That is perfectly true; the love of size persuades the new-made millionaire to order large dinners, large houses, and large canvases. It persuades the newly educated to demand large head-lines, vast sensations, and long novels. But M. Joseph practises what he preaches, and he designed for Colonel Davis such a dinner as rightly expresses his conviction. Perhaps we may set it down, for it proves our point more clearly than would a page of argument. Here, then, is the little banquet offered at the Savoy:

Petite Marmite.
Sole Reichenberg.
Caneton à la presse. Salade de Saison.
Fonds d'artichauts à la Reine.
Bombe pralinée. Petits Fours.
Panier fleuri.

After such a dinner no man could be either hungry nor surfeited, and to think of it is to regret that London knows M. Joseph no more, that to contemplate his artistry one must cross the Channel, and find in the Rue Marivaux what is now denied to the Savoy.

But Colonel Davis's treatise not only tells us how to dine; it reminds us how great a change has come over this London of ours. Time was when an Englishman's house was his castle, when he firmly believed that a mutton chop eaten at his own fireside was infinitely better than all the French kickshaws in the world, when he gaily quoted Thackeray's lines,—

Dear Lucy, you know what my wish
is,—

I hate all your Frenchified fuss :
Your silly entrées and made dishes
Were never intended for us—

and thought that the last word had been said. He ate vilely; he could not call it dining; and he was content, because his patriotism did not suffer. But he has learned a lesson in the last thirty years, and if economy still keeps him at home, he celebrates as many occasions as he can by a little dinner at a restaurant. The consequence is that France, Italy, and Germany have invaded us. You may now dine at any price you like, and after the custom of whatever country suits you best. If you wish to wash down sausage and *sauerkraut* with the best Spaten beer, you may do it at a moderate price; if you prefer macaroni and Chianti, there is no quarter of the town in which you cannot satisfy your desire; and "the High French kitchen," of various degrees, may be encountered wherever an hotel hangs out its sign. The quality of the cooking is not always admirable, but at least there is a pretence of invention, which goes

further than an underdone joint and boiled potatoes.

The Franco-German War, as if to prove that no disaster was without a compensation, inaugurated the newer method. The poor exiles, languishing for their fatherland and depressed by the fog which they detect in London on the sunniest day, would have perished miserably had not the Café Royal been established for their benefit. But once established, the Café Royal attracted the wise men of our own race, and thus it was that the English were taught to dine after a wiser and a better fashion. For there can be no doubt that there is but one art of cookery in the world,—the art of France. Other countries have their own dishes, their own moments of inspiration. The soups of Russia have been honoured by adoption in the capital of the allied nation, while the roe and sinews of sturgeon are universally esteemed; the saffron and garlic of Spain are our common property; and the Swedish *smorgasbrod*, though it has never travelled south, is a hero's way of beginning a banquet. But there is no country which does not owe its kitchen to France, whose very language alone can describe a dinner in adequate terms. And while at the palaces described by Colonel Davis any Englishman may eat a perfect dinner, he cannot taste the unalloyed pleasure which the same dinner would give him in Paris. There may be something in the atmosphere; there is more in the method of presentation. In London the *maitre d'hotel*, a Frenchman of course, is constrained to speak English, and is then hampered in the discharge of a delicate duty. But it is the manner in which a dinner is served that puts upon it the perfect finish. M. Joseph, quoted by Colonel Davis,

declares that "a dish learnedly prepared by an incomparable cook might pass unseen, or at least unappreciated if the *maitre d'hotel*, who becomes for the nonce a kind of stage-manager, did not know how to present the masterpiece in such a fashion as to make it desirable." In other words, the *maitre d'hotel* must not only understand the composition of every dish which he places before his clients, he must have the suave diplomacy which shall add a proper touch of intimacy, and which shall persuade the amateur that the skill and fancy lavished upon the dish has been lavished for him, and for him only. But England has never produced a *maitre d'hotel*. Head-waiters we have innumerable, and excellent they are, shrewd, confidential, quick of memory, admirable gossips, even witty. Yet they lack the air of distinction, of smiling dignity, which enables such a *maitre d'hotel* as M. Joseph to persuade the diner that he is eating a dinner prepared for his peculiar palate.

But, if Englishmen cannot set a dinner upon the table with the delicate skill of a Frenchman, what shall we say of our English kitchen? Nothing, save that it is *simplex munditiis*, plain in its neatness. It is, moreover, dying in the restaurants of London. It lingers in old-fashioned clubs and in old-fashioned taverns. There are haunts in which you may find a beef-steak pudding unrivalled, and if you are very hungry you may eat it with pleasure. But France and Italy have carried away the palm, and of the innumerable restaurants mentioned by Colonel Davis there are but half-a-dozen which respect the traditions of the old English kitchen. The patriot will find it a sorrowful confession, and it is the more sorrowful, because the raw materials of a banquet are better and cheaper in London than

in Paris. But we need not take our inferiority to heart. We can eat the best of French dinners in London, although they do not taste quite the same on the banks of the Thames as on the boulevards and quays of Paris; and we may soothe our vanity by the reflection that the heroes of Homer understood not the art of cooking, that Ulysses and Achilles and the rest were quite content with beef, if only there were enough of it.

There is yet another reason why the English cannot taste their dinner as they should. They are careless of their appetite, for not content with dulling their palate with tea in the afternoon, they lunch so late that hunger appeased often shrinks from the task of dinner. Burton in his *ANATOMY OF MELANCHOLY* complained that the colleges of Oxford did not allow seven hours to elapse between dinner and supper, and the epicure who lunches at two is hardly ready to dine at eight. The French arrange their life with a wiser forethought. He who breakfasts at twelve may dine at half-past seven; and not only is he prepared for the climax of the day, his dinner, but to balance it he must needs invent another delicate work of art,—the breakfast, which might well suggest an interesting treatise to Colonel Davis.

However, there is one ingredient common to every meal, French or English, and that is conversation. The Colonel, we think, treats this branch of his subject somewhat carelessly; his humour too often degenerates to an idle levity. It is well to know where to dine; it is also important to understand with whom to dine. We have no right to choose our company without thought. At dinner a man should be in his best humour, since his work is finished, and he lives only to please his senses. Fatigue has not overtaken him; ex-

citement has not dulled his wits nor turned them to hysteria. He has no right to frolic, as at supper, nor to be dumb as at an early breakfast. He must pay his shot by a due interchange of talk. What shall he talk about? Plutarch once discussed at considerable length the question whether men should discourse of philosophy at table, and he decided, if we remember rightly, that there was no objection so long as philosophy was treated in the spirit of gaiety. And the decision is wise enough. All things are fit food for converse, so long as they are handled with a lightness proper to the occasion, philosophy, gossip, letters, or sport. But two reservations may be made: no man should be held to an opinion flung across the dinner-table, nor should he ever be reminded of a thoughtless jest uttered under the genial influence of a French cook. Otherwise, talk is imperative, the quick talk which pierces like a sword-thrust and is as easily parried. For this reason, only a savage would dine to the music of a

band. There is more than one restaurant in London in which conversation is silenced by the noisy rattle of worn-out tunes. We have even heard diners so lost to shame that they added their chorus to the noise of the Hungarians, green, blue, or yellow. Now, this outrage may cover the imbecility of those who dine without thought or without joy; it cannot be resented too bitterly by men of sense. And after the dinner comes the bill, as Colonel Davis reminds us, heavy most often and (let us hope) always cheerfully paid. But even when it is paid, there remains something still. "The thought that a great *chef* had given to composing a dish," we quote the Colonel's own words, "the minute care with which the dinner had been prepared and served, could not be put down in money value; they are the courtesies that the professors of an art pay to an enthusiastic student." With which expression of proper gratitude we take leave of an intelligent and entertaining book.

OVER THE SLEEPING CITY.

AN hour before midnight the west of London even in the summer-time is quieting down rapidly. The main thoroughfares still rumble with traffic and the omnibuses still continue to ply, but in lesser numbers, rattling past with few passengers at a brisker pace than would be possible, or prudent, in daylight. It was on the roof of one of these, following the route of Knightsbridge and the Fulham road, that on an evening in last August I travelled four pleasant miles, easily and with enjoyment of the cool fresh air, from crowded St. James's to the far side of the bridge at Chelsea station where the suburb of Fulham begins.

As I alighted, the giant voice of Westminster was tolling out the hour with a distant solemn roar unknown in busy hours. A hush was fast settling down on the great city. The darkening of the shop-fronts had already thrown the streets into partial gloom. Little groups of men stood at the street-corners where tavern-lights still flared, but these were thinning rapidly. A hundred yards back from the roadway on the northern side, out on the quiet turf of the athletic ground, you are away from the glare of lamps and the concourse of man, and for all that can be seen or heard London is not. Three hours previously I had stood on the same spot in broad daylight anxiously watching, sprawled on the turf and surrounded by a busy crowd, a writhing mass of parti-coloured silk and netting within whose folds gas had just been turned on from a large main. On the same spot now,

deserted, solemn, majestic, uprose a huge shapely globe blotting out the sky.

Presently comrades came dropping in by twos and threes, and the talk was of the venture in hand; for in the small hours there was to be a balloon-ascent, and probabilities and possibilities were being keenly discussed. After another three hours would there be sufficient lifting-power without the introduction of more live gas? This was an important question, since the gas-man had gone home to bed an hour ago taking his key with him. Would the night-dew condense too heavily on the cold silk? Would the wind rise or veer, or, worse, would it die out altogether with midnight? A sky-voyage on a moonless night was not to be too lightly embarked on with miles on miles of house-tops around and a winding river broad and black to leeward. Then again the speed of the upper currents was unknown, and the sea lay across Kent only sixty miles away. Indeed, should our course be for the Hope Light-house the water we should reach in less than thirty miles would, for all the efforts to escape that we could make, be practically the open sea for us. But auguries were favourable and satisfied at last the little band quit the wet grass,—the three aeronauts to simulate sleep stretched on the benches of the grand stand beneath improvised coverlets, the rest to disappear mysteriously somewhere. Two hours later we found them (having by that time sated ourselves with the pleasing delusion that we had

been resting) congregated in a shed dimly lit with candles stuck in niches round the walls, telling stories and singing songs,—just as you will find true English spirits the world over, and more particularly such genuine comrades, willing volunteers all, as had come to aid in launching us skyward and see us well away. And it was already time for action. The night, though dark, was clear, and away in the north-north-east the sun, with its shallow dip below the horizon somewhere behind the neighbouring great wheel in Earl's Court, was brightening the sky-line ruled level with far roof-ridges. In two hours the dawn would be breaking to those who should be sailing above the clouds.

Once in the car you seem to belong already to another element, while your craft resents all connection with earth. But lately a tumbled mass twisted and wrinkled, it is now shapely as a bird, a thing of beauty, nobly proportioned, and like a true creature of the air is struggling for release, sweeping and writhing, but with perfect grace, as a score of men hold her in check. At last she is free, but for one restraining rope, when her motion is closely watched. How does she take her flight? Of this only those who stand without can well judge. From within you lose sight of the earth in the darkness, and are unconscious of any motion upwards or downwards. There is no sensation, but the occasional tugging and quivering of the rope. Thus it is an unwelcome surprise to find oneself returned to earth with an unpleasant jolt. When this has been repeated a few times the desire is not to avoid it by getting out, but with all speed to be rid of rude earth altogether. And the moment has now come. We rise once more, still a trifle too reluctantly; so a bag is dropped entire, and a long

second elapses before its thud is heard on the turf, showing us that the earth is at last being left for good. And so at last we slip our cable, amid the cheers of the little crowd below.

The enclosure we are quitting does not exceed the limits of an ordinary foot-ball ground, but its black area is doubled by the night, and we seem to be rising out of some vast chasm into the lesser darkness of the sky. But our motion, though upward, is slanting with the wind, and in another moment out of the gloom the maze of street-lamps bursts upon us, for we have cleared the nearest houses, and stand away over the Fulham Road, rising yet and quickening our speed as we catch the currents of the upper air. And now (the first duty of the careful aeronaut) we can guess at our direction. The Fulham Road lies toward the north-east, and we have crossed it at so broad an angle as to make it morally certain that we shall land in Kent. The river, however, should be another guide, since at our reckoning we should traverse it directly, nearly at right angles, and but little above Battersea Bridge. And we are not without further guidance. From some street far down a voice reaches us; a foot-passenger has sighted our dark mass against the starlight, and a short colloquy ensues, cast in hasty sentences, as to our direction.

But our friend is already behind us, cut off by blocks of houses, for we are rising in the faster currents, and are skimming over the roofs and roadways briskly. Turning now and looking ahead, the houses below have come to an end, and the lines of stars in the streets have left a broad blank in which all is darkness, save for bright or coloured gleams here and there, spreading a rippling glare around; save too for certain narrow double lines dotted in with brilliant

points, crossing the dark channel and repeating themselves at almost regular intervals again and again away into dim distance. We are about to cross the river, which thus betrays itself together with its various craft bearing signal-lamps, and its bridges brilliantly lighted. Soon we are out over mid-stream floating high aloft, where not a splash or murmur makes itself heard. A river in flood appeals to us by its wild grandeur and the uproar of tossing waters; yet even so it can hardly impress one more than does this night view of Thames with its solemn sweep through silent London.

When the far bank is reached, and houses are under us once more, there is an altered aspect of the streets, due probably to our increased altitude. The roadways lie in dark lines along their length, but having an ill-defined fringe on either side as of frosted silver. The explanation is not hard to find. The surface of smooth flag-stones is more reflective than that of the trodden road, and the beams of street-lamps are faintly thrown back to us off the pavements. But speedily, as we look sheer down, the illumined town has once more terminated abruptly in a vacant space of large dimensions with straight and clean-cut boundaries. We are crossing an angle of Battersea Park, and this is no sooner passed than there opens out on our right another large dark gap whose curious figure, an elongated triangle, puzzles us. It can hardly be a reservoir, for the familiar tanks of Battersea are on our left; neither is there any recreation-ground nearer than Kennington; nor in this part of London is there any burial-plot save the huge oblong of Brompton far behind. We are not long left in perplexity. Trailing through the black gap is seen a lurid flare fringed with silver, and a shriek comes up

breaking the silence painfully. One is apt to forget how much open space a railway claims, especially near a busy terminus.

The engine puffing below us in the delta of the London and South-Western Railway is doing shunting work, and now blows a familiar call, not a sustained hooting but a *toot-a-too* in broken blasts. Some impulse moved me to imitate the signal with a powerful reed horn which I carried, and this provoked such a prompt response from below us to make it clear that we were sighted by the engine-driver, and were being challenged to a competition which indeed straightway ensued. Then some driver down the line joined in, and next a bargeman on the river caught the inspiration, and contributed a dismal piping on a wheezy whistle. And in a minute's space, up and down the stream, a score of vessels swelled the chorus, answering each toot from the sky with a fiendish discord. The very sensible interval between the challenge and the response was an indication of our distance from the earth. A still better measure of altitude, up to a thousand feet or more, is to be found in echo off the surface of the ground below, and practically any surface will serve if proper appliances are used. An aneroid can at best only tell the height a balloon may be riding at as compared with that of the place of departure. It can take no account of hills or depressions, nor can these be judged otherwise from above, since to the eye the earth presents only a dead level. On the other hand the interval occupied by echo carefully noted supplies a true measure of the gulf between the observer and the ground below him. An outlying reservoir of the Southwark and Vauxhall water-works is beneath us, and a blast of the horn brings back an

echo of astounding strength and volume; for no better reflecting surface for sound exists than that of a sheet of unruffled water,—a fact obviously only confided to the aeronaut. We are beyond the range of voice now and it is a favourable opportunity for testing by means of echo the quality of the night air over London as a vehicle for sound. The myriad chimneys below are innocent of smoke, and in the small dead hours the air around is equable. With what ears then will the silent city receive a summons from the sky?

A horn is used, so constructed as to concentrate its sound in one path, and leaning well over the car one blows a blast perpendicularly downwards, while another listens with an ear-trumpet. We are upwards of a thousand feet high, a distance greater than between the shores of the river at Westminster Bridge; yet the echo comes back with a burst, quickly ending but painful to the ear by its very intensity. Roofs and roadways lying square to the blast have all replied in one united recoil. The horn is now directed at an angle slanting downwards, with a result strikingly changed and beautiful. The note is prolonged, continuous, and always true. It is like the long-drawn-out note of some wild harp-string slowly dying. Later in the same night, when we were far out in the open country, a remarkable effect was observed for which I can obtain no explanation. Held at a certain angle the horn awoke a near full echo of its true note; then followed a slight interval after which a second echo came back, not only fainter but appreciably raised in pitch.

We have been in the sky now for some twenty minutes and our sensations bid us believe that we are in a warm and genial atmosphere. An hour ago thermometers, suspended a

few feet above the ground, registered 57° in the enclosure of Stamford Bridge, yet the night felt raw and, clinging to our wraps, we were glad to keep ourselves in motion. Now, though unsheltered on all sides and without the power of exercise, an overcoat is almost a burden. It becomes interesting to test accurately the actual temperature of the air around us, that is, of the strata lying over Clapham at, say, twice the height of St. Paul's at half-past three on a morning in the middle of August. A bare thermometer-tube, divested of any mounting and merely tied at its upper end to a piece of string, is whirled round at arm's length outside the car for an interval of time sufficient to allow the slender instrument to be brought to the same temperature as that of the air with which it is thus brought in rapid contact. The result shows that despite the evidence of our senses the night air remains precisely the same as when we left the earth. The feeling of increased warmth is partly due to our travelling with the wind and thus encountering no draught; but it may be attributed yet more to our being removed from the low-lying layers of moisture,—a strong argument in favour of elevated situations. At a higher altitude we should probably meet with yet warmer strata, for the baking heat of the previous day, stored up to our discomfort through long hours in the pavements and walls and roofs of our dwellings, has now risen above the housetops, tempering the upper air. A striking proof of this awaits us, for, though we have thrown out no ballast, our balloon is now ascending. The huge silk globe above us, exposing its large surface to the air, is becoming sensibly warmed and dried.

Instinctively drawing deep and invigorating breaths as we soar up-

wards, and with that indefinable exhilaration which no one knows save the mountaineer, we enter a new world, for we have climbed into the early light of dawn, while the face of earth, though still in gloom, begins to wear an altered aspect. We are fast bidding farewell to London, passing out beyond Peckham and Forest Hill into the open fields and gardens of Kent. The spangled floor below is frayed and fretted out in lines and patches of fading lights. To the north and west stretches the whole extent of London, a broad tract of tiny stars massed together and fading into distance, remotely resembling some portion of the Milky Way when brought to closer range in the field of a large telescope. Here and there are vacancies, the rifts and coal-sacks, as it were; elsewhere are brighter regions, throwing a nebulous haze into the sky, where street-lamps cluster in some busy centre. To the right and left, outside the limits of the city, bright patches of light gleam out in the lower darkness, showing where distant towns are sleeping. These patches are ruddy or white, doubtless according as the light proceeds from burning gas or the glow of electric current.

And to our vision there is another light already in the sky. On the north-east horizon a low level bank of slate shows up with sharp outline against a brightening background. Above it stretches a ribbon of dull red shading off into a fringe of orange, which broadens and brightens as we watch. We have occupied perhaps five minutes in gazing on this new feature when, turning, we see a fresh and greater beauty born within the brief interval. High in the opposite quarter of the heavens the cloud-wreaths of broad stratus have caught the first flush of dawn, and show rose-

red billowy crests with deep purple hollows.

There is a curious chill about the dawn, which must be partly accounted for on physical grounds. Those who have been abroad through the night experience shortly before the sun rises a marked accession of cold, a searching cold,—never more noticeable than in summer—which belongs to no other period of the night. The same may be noticed, more particularly in special climates, at the period when the sun has recently set, and again during the moments of total eclipse. Though that interval is too brief to allow any great diminution of temperature to be shown on recording instruments, yet observers will agree as to a sudden sensation of chilliness as strange as it is real. I think this feeling is less marked in the sky, unless indeed, as I have known, you chance to be in the upper margin of cloud which is evaporating into the warmer air above, in which case the cold is intense.

Nevertheless our balloon (always a most delicate air-thermometer) recorded a fall of temperature as the dawn was breaking in a most palpable manner. It climbed down rapidly, putting back the dawn, and almost before we had time to realise it, we were within five hundred feet of dark green fields below, and dusky woods to right and left. And at that moment the air became full of a twittering sound so widespread and so intense as to produce a most singular and striking effect. It was the noise we were accustomed to hear in summer when the day begins to break and the waking birds are preluding their morning song. But evidently we had caused consternation in the woods, and moreover in our quiet but lofty retreat the subdued sound was gathered in from over wide areas.

Directly afterwards we had occa-

sion to note the same wide-spread calling among another family of the bird-creation. A cock was crowing in some farmyard hard by, the challenge being of course answered by another in another direction, but not by one only. Two or three would be answering at once from different points; further and fainter, and further yet and all around, came the chorus from homesteads unseen and hard to number. Regarding the unbroken stretch of country before us it was impossible to conceive any point within the far horizon where the impetuous uproar just arisen would cease. Rather one must suppose that the whole country-side, a district, a county, nay some large division of England, must be in full crow at that moment. In which case are there any privileged roosts which have a claim to precedence?

An interesting fact relating to the birds was now noticed. A flock, seemingly of wild fowl, was flying at some distance but well above us, and afforded a rare opportunity of testing the height at which birds will fly. Almost invariably high-flying birds shun a balloon, and are nowhere to be seen during a free voyage through the sky. These too were giving us a wide berth, but held their course, apparently a long one, which lay out over the Medway. Their flight must have been at the level of not less than six hundred feet. Misty grey light was flooding the country, growing rapidly and showing objects dimly out to the far horizon; and now

for a brief moment a coppery limb of the sun peered through a rift in the bank of slate, only to retire quickly again. Here and there were signs of rustic life; a small group of figures watching us from a rick-yard; a matron at her cottage door; a labourer trudging heavily to his early toil and showing little interest in our approach. No wonted shouting came from fields and lanes; there was a general apathy everywhere, save indeed among the flocks and herds. In a sheep-fold below us there is the wildest confusion and alarm; horses gallop madly round their enclosures; a neighbouring farmstead is demoralised, even the poultry flying to hide themselves.

With the return of day the task assigned to us, which had been of an experimental nature, terminated, and, reserving our ballast to break the final fall, we allowed our balloon to wander through the skies and settle earthwards at its will. So we sped on with the freshening breeze of sunrise, over the Cobham commons, across the Medway, looking down upon noble Leeds Castle with its ancient towers and broad waters, passing on over the King's Woods till green pastures and ripe cornfields gave place to gardens of hops, a ground which the aeronaut does well to shun. Here, hard by a peaceful village church, in a small rich pasture heavy with morning dew, we regretfully reached our haven.

JOHN M. BACON.

TOM D'URFEY.

LET us glance for a moment at the face that looks amiably out on us from its mighty periwig in a portrait by a certain E. Gouge, that Sir John Hawkins included in his *HISTORY OF MUSIC*. It is a face handsome enough in its way, the nose a trifle too long perhaps for regularity of features; shrewdness and good temper are mingled in the humorous mouth ready to break into a smile, and the eyes twinkle merrily. It may be that to divert the tedium of posing the sitter entertained the artist with his wealth of song and anecdote, and that the latter caught mouth and eyes at the moment of some new quip or rhyme being evolved. Certainly E. Gouge was not unappreciative of his subject's qualities; indeed, like Mr. Wegg, he dropped into poetry over them and inscribed beneath the portrait the lines that follow:

Whilst D'Urfeys voice his verse does
raise,
When D'Urfeys sings his tuneful lays,
Give D'Urfeys Lyric Muse the bays.

These bays have withered sadly since then, and the tuneful lays are as dead as the voice that trolled them; poor Tom's a-cold these many years for lack of interest to warm his memory. He is but a name to the generality of readers, vaguely associated with English music by some, as vaguely associated with English quack medicine by others, a kind of shadowy Holloway of the past. "D'Urfeys,—D'Urfeys," said somebody to me, "didn't he invent some sort of pills?" "He did," was

the reply, "and an excellent specific they were deemed in his time, but for our squeamish modern digestions they are found a little too strong." As a matter of fact the *PILLS TO PURGE MELANCHOLY* have only once been reprinted since 1720, an example of a lack of enterprise in publishers that cannot be condoned.

But to return to the compiler of that joyous compendium of lyrics. Grandpapa D'Urfé, a keen Huguenot, not without aristocratic pretensions (witness his *de*), found means to escape from La Rochelle, where the siege was then raging, and took refuge in England, at that time in a sympathetic mood with distressed Protestants and busy with preparing Buckingham's expedition for the relief of the beleaguered city. It was to Devonshire that Monsieur D'Urfé made his way, settling in Exeter with his wife and son, afterwards to be Tom's father. That blameless pastoral poet and warrior, Honoré D'Urfé, Comte de Châteauneuf, Marquis de Valéoméry, Baron de Château-Morand, whose lengthy romance *ASTRÉE* gave so much pleasure to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, was apparently a brother of the Huguenot refugee and therefore Tom's grand-uncle, not his uncle as stated in *THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY*. Whatever the relationship, Tom was proud of this distinguished relative in particular and of his noble ancestry in general, a pardonable weakness that brought him some banter from his contemporaries. Somehow our English insularity never permits us

to take foreign aristocracies quite seriously. Tom's father married into a good English family, taking to wife one of the Marmions of Huntingdonshire, from which race sprang also Shackerley Marmion the dramatist, one of Ben Jonson's "sons"; and in 1653 Mrs. D'Urfey (by this time apparently the name had assumed its English form) presented her husband with the future songwriter.

Of his boyhood and youth no particulars have survived. If the anonymous author of the squib, *WIT FOR MONEY OR POET STUTTER*, is to be trusted, his classical attainments in later life were of the slightest, and we might infer from this that his education was neglected. But, after all, pamphleteers need not be believed implicitly, and we know that somewhere between 1660 and 1670 Tom was entered at one of the Inns of Court, a process requiring some acquaintance at least with polite learning. Behold him then, a gawky provincial youth, launched from his distant home in the drowsy old episcopal city of the West on the world of London,—the gay London of the Restoration, making up for time lost under the blight of the Commonwealth, its ordeal by fire and plague past, fervent in the business of pleasure, serving a King who from years of dull exile had come into his own again, to be (perhaps in too literal a sense) the father of his people, and to show them by royal example the most witty and amusing fashions of prodigality. For a young man of Mr. D'Urfey's presence and accomplishments such a new environment must have had considerable fascination and influence, so much indeed that he at first grievously neglected the study of the law, and finally forsook it altogether. To blame him would be unduly censorious. When

you are a good-looking young fellow with a pretty taste in wine, women, and dress, literary gifts sufficient for the production of plays for the contemporary stage, and the power of writing popular songs in unlimited quantities and singing them yourself,—when you are all this, is it to be expected that you should spend your youth poring over musty law-books and waiting for a first brief that tarries sadly by the way? By no means, thought Mr. D'Urfey, who was quick to realise his true business. "Let me," he might have said, anticipating Fletcher of Saltoun, "let me make the songs of my country, and I care not who makes the laws." What he did say was: "My good or ill stars ordain'd me to be a knight-errant in the fairy field of poesy."

What fruits the fairy field bore the knight-errant it is difficult to say. If he did not make money rapidly, it was not for lack of industry. In *POET STUTTER* the alarming statement is put into his mouth that he has written seven thousand nine hundred and fifty-three songs, two thousand two hundred and fifty ballads, and nineteen hundred and fifty-six catches, besides madrigals, odes, and other lyrical pieces *ad infinitum*. There is, of course, no necessity to accept this, save in so far as it serves to indicate Tom's amazing fertility. In another place he confesses to having composed more odes than Horace and about four times as many comedies as Terence. Probably the odes and political songs were the most profitable of his productions. The period was in some respects a propitious one for the impecunious minor poet. It was the aristocratic fashion to dabble in letters and the patronage of letters, and professional writers turned the dabbling to account. If it meant nothing more, it meant dinners. My Lord Leicester received Parnassus every

Saturday evening when in town. Leicester House was a good place to go to, but Lord Dorset's establishment was still better, for he had a pleasant way, when in generous mood, of putting new minted guineas beneath the plates of his literary guests.

Tom tasted of these graceful hospitalities with the rest, and with the rest repaid them in dedications and ceremonial Pindarics; thus in one of his songs he celebrates the excellent strong ale on tap at Dorset's country seat of Knole. But the patron of all patrons for him was the Duke of Wharton; at Winchendon he could always depend on a welcome. It was in his honour, so tradition says, that His Grace built in his grounds that temple of conviviality, appropriately named Brimmer Hall:

Fam'd Brimmer Hall, for Beauty,
Music, Wit
New form'd, and only for thy Godhead
fit.

The godhead, I must explain, is Wharton's. The couplet comes from one of Tom's dedications, and the compliment gives some idea of the kind of thing patrons had to stomach in those days, though, judging by the guineas and dinners and convivial temples, they rather liked it than otherwise.

But Tom D'Urfey had other patrons to applaud him, and, what was more important to a poor poet, to signify the same in the manner usual in patrons. It says much for his personal charm that he was able to keep on good terms with no less than four monarchs, Charles the Second, James the Second, William of Orange, and Queen Anne, without once swerving from the Protestant faith. Perhaps none of them took Tom sufficiently seriously to trouble about his religion. With the first he was evidently on a friendly footing. Pardonably proud

of the incident, he remarks in a note to one of his political ditties: "I had the honour to sing it with King Charles at Whitehall: he holding one part of the paper with me." For James he perpetrated one of his terrible Pindaric panegyrics in 1685; for William he composed on the death of Queen Mary a funeral ode, also in the inevitable Pindarics, entitled GLORIANA, which must have had, I imagine, the effect of deepening the royal widower's gloom; while on one occasion he so enraptured Queen Anne by singing some rather ribald verses about the Electress Sophia, next heir to the throne, that in the moment's enthusiasm the good Queen handed him fifty guineas.

If Tom was thus the delight of kings and the great ones of the land, his muse was no less beloved by a wider public. As he phrased the matter himself, in that engaging stammer of his which links him with another of the good fellows of English literature, a later and greater ornament of its history: "The town may da-da-damn me for a poet, but they si-si-sing my songs for all that." They did sing his songs. It would have been strange had such tuneful numbers, with sentiments so admirably adapted to the taste of the time, not won instant popularity. Tom himself sang them, and by all accounts sang them well; his impediment of speech disappeared when he wedded his words to music. In this connection Oldys, the antiquarian, tells a story of him that reminds one of the episode of the sailor and the admiral's pig in Michael Scott's romance, *THE CRUISE OF THE MIDGE*. He was in Clare Market one day haggling for a shoulder of mutton. Tom was pertinacious, the butcher obdurate. Finally, to get rid of so unprofitable a customer, the latter said he could have the joint for nothing if he would

only ask for it without stammering. Whereupon our poet, with his ready command of words and melody, burst into extempore song which came without slip or pause, and the mutton was duly handed over.

Tom, as a genial fellow always ready to oblige a company with a song of his own making, was by way of being an idol of gay society. So we may infer from Addison's words: "Many an honest gentleman has got a reputation in his country by pretending to have been in company with Tom D'Urfev." It is, observe, as Tom D'Urfev, not as Thomas D'Urfev, that this delight of royalty, nobility, and honest country gentlemen has come down to us. That lot he shares with certain others, whom the historic tradition, dropping formality, presents to us with the easy familiarity of the diminutive Christian name. It is not every one that bears such uncereemonious handling; who has ever heard of Frank Bacon, or Jack Milton, or Bill Wordsworth? Even the intimates of these eminent persons, I feel, would have hesitated so to take their names in vain. But it is not a mere question of eminence:

Mellifluous Shakespeare, whose enchanting quill
Commanded mirth or passion, was but Will.
And famous Jonson, though his learned pen
Be dipt in Castaly, is still but Ben.

Rather is this question of familiar nomenclature to be explained by the personal popularity of the subject with his friends and contemporaries; he was Tom, Dick, or Harry to them, and as Tom, Dick, or Harry he has reached us.

Tom, then, we may assume, was a welcome guest at any table, and his songs found their way to many a jovial board at which he never sat.

Thus writes Alexander Pope from a country house to his friend Cromwell, under date April 10th, 1710.

I have not quoted one Latin author since I came down, but have learned without book a song of Mr. Thomas D'Urfev's, who is your only poet of tolerable reputation in this country. He makes all the merriment in our entertainments, and but for him there would be so miserable a dearth of catches that I fear they would *sans cérémonie* put either the parson or me upon making some for them. Any man, of any quality, is heartily welcome to the best toping-table of our gentry, who can roundly hum out some fragments or rhapsodies of his works; so that, in the same manner as it was said of Homer to his detractors—What! dares any one despise him who has given so many men to eat?—[meaning the rhapsodists who lived by repeating his verses] so may it be said of Mr. D'Urfev to his detractors—Dares any one despise him who has made so many men drink? Alas, sir! this is a glory which neither you nor I must ever pretend to. Neither you, with your Ovid, nor I, with my Statius, can amuse a whole Board of justices and extraordinary squires, or gain one hum of approbation, or laugh of admiration. These things, they would say, are too studious; they may do well enough with such as love reading, but give us your ancient poet Mr. D'Urfev.

In their ancient poet these rural worthies certainly had one who could tune his supple song to every emotion of which they were capable. Few of his lyrics are indeed of any literary merit; but they have a *verve* and an inextinguishable gaiety that make them excellent as songs, if not as poetry. Tom, honest soul, was no poet; a verse or two here and there amid his multifarious outpourings are but exceptions that prove the rule. But let us not too greatly disparage him. If he is not with the singers of genius, he takes rank with that secondary group of which Béranger is the leading figure. The astonishing fertility of the man is in itself impressive. Hum an air to him, then

give him a scrap of paper and a bottle of wine, and you shall have your song while you wait. It was to his advantage that, in addition to his knack of versification, he had an excellent ear for music and some acquaintance with it. In the dedication to the *PILLS TO PURGE MELANCHOLY* he speaks with complacency of his double genius for poetry and music. In the case of many, if not most, of his songs the melody was there before the words. Such musical inspirations came from all sources; sometimes it was an old traditional tune, sometimes an Italian *aria* wedded to barbarous Italian words which no honest country gentleman could be expected to understand. In a sense, indeed, he got the better of the Italians: "He has," remarks Addison with dry humour, "made use of Italian tunes and *sonatas* for promoting the Protestant interest and turned a considerable part of the Pope's music against himself." While on the subject of the music of D'Urfey's songs, it should be said, in passing, that not a few of them had the honour of being set by no less a composer than Henry Purcell.

The famous *WIT AND MIRTH, OR PILLS TO PURGE MELANCHOLY*, is a vast collection that includes not only many of the compiler's own compositions, but also traditional songs and songs by other authors. One or two examples of the former may be quoted to exhibit Tom's range and skill. Here is one, "The Saint in Saint James's Chapel," which will serve as specimen of his *vers de société* manner.

One Sunday at St. James's prayers,
The Prince and Princess by,
I, dress'd with all my whalebone airs,
Sate in the closet nigh.
I bent my knees, I held my book,
I read the answers o'er,
But was perverted by a look
That pierc'd me from the door.

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High thoughts of heaven I came to use
And blest devotion there,
Which gay young Strephon made me
lose
And other raptures share.
He watch'd to lead me to my chair
And bow'd with courtly grace,
But whisper'd love into my ear
Too warm for that grave place.

"Love, love," cried he, "by all ador'd
My fervent heart has won!"
But I, grown peevish at that word,
Desir'd he would be gone:
He went, whilst I that looked his way
A kinder answer meant,
And did for all my sins that day
Not half so much repent.

The next, by way of contrast, represents the rural ditties which form so large a proportion of the collection, though its excellent moral is perhaps unusual.

Dear Jemmy when he sees me upon a
holiday,
When bonny lads are easy and all
a-dancing be,
When tiptoes are in fashion and loons
will jump and play,
Then he too takes occasion to leer
and ogle me,
He'll kiss my hand with squeezing
whene'er he takes my part,
But with each kiss
He crowns my bliss,
I feel him at my heart.

But Jockey with his cattle and pam-
per'd bags of coin
Oft gave poor Jemmy battle, whom,
faith, I wish were mine;
He tells me he is richer and I shall
ride his mare,
That Jemmy's but a ditcher and can
no money spare;
But, welladay, my fancy thinks more
of Jemmy's suit,
I take no pride
To kirk to ride,
I'll gang with him a-foot.

It is fitting to conclude these citations with a couple of verses that in their amiable optimism embody, we may imagine, Tom D'Urfey's philosophy of life.

The famous old prophet, who thirty
 years toil'd
 To write us the Psalms that Dan
 Hopkins hath spoil'd,
 In giving account of the ages of men
 Has strangely confined us to three
 score and ten,
 And tells us, to scare us, his last hour
 is near
 Who enters the sad climacterical year.
 Then well is the man who, inspired by
 good wine,
 Cares neither for seventy nor seven
 times nine,
 Whose jolly brisk humour adds sands
 to his glass,
 Who, standing upright, can look fate
 in the face,
 Who makes much of life, and when
 nature is due
 Declines like a flower as sweet as it
 grew!

To sum up: what can be said of the PILLS TO PURGE MELANCHOLY? They are little like to cure the melancholy of the moralist, if they do not rather aggravate his distemper. The gossip Chamfort tells us how M. de Conflans was once entertaining some young courtiers at supper. The first song of the evening was broad but not too improper. Thereupon, however, a certain M. de Fronsac got on his legs and sang a ditty that amazed the company, gay as it was. There was an awkward silence at the end, broken by the host who exclaimed: "Fronsac, you surprise me! There are ten bottles of champagne between that song and the first." It must be confessed that not a few of the lyrics with which Mr. D'Urfev charmed his king and countrymen were of what we may call the ten-bottle variety. Perhaps it was one of them, lingering on after a hundred years of life, that raised the ire of Colonel Newcome on the occasion of his visit to the Cave of Harmony. They were for an age those songs, an age when the grosser pleasures of life as well as the finer had literary celebration; they were not for all

time. We banish them to the top shelf to keep congenial company with the too candid chronicler of the DAMES GALANTES and the garrulous mentor who taught LE MOYEN DE PARVENIR.

Even when we turn to D'Urfev's dramatic works, we are still haunted by his lyrical facility, for the best things, it is no exaggeration to say the only good things, in the score of plays he fathered are the incidental songs. One would like to say something pleasant of Tom's playhouse efforts, but common honesty forbids it. His gibes, his gambols, his flashes of merriment are dull as ditch-water now, even to a reader conscientious in his quest of some spark of the wit that makes the work of some of Tom's contemporaries, — Congreve, Wycherley, Vanburgh, Farquhar, even poor forgotten Mrs. Behn—so entertaining to a modern reader. Construction, study of character, dialogue, in none of these is Tom successful. As acting plays even, his productions seem to have achieved very moderate popularity, though his staunch patron Charles is said to have attended three of the first five nights of THE PLOTTING SISTERS, a record to turn our contemporary dramatists green with envy. But if the King admired Tom's stage-work, the same cannot be said of one of his most distinguished subjects. Coming from a first night, somebody remarked to Dryden: "Was there ever such stuff! I did not think that even this author could have written so ill." "Oh sir," responded Dryden, "you don't know my friend Tom; I'll answer for him, he shall write worse yet." Dryden's friend Tom was not even given the credit of originality. Gerard Langbaine, our chief contemporary authority on the Restoration drama, thus caustically dismisses him:

A person now living, who was first bred to the law, but left that rugged way for the flowery fields of Poetry. He is accounted by some for an admirable poet, but it is by those who are not acquainted much with authors and therefore are deceived by appearances, taking that for his own wit, which he only borrows from others: for Mr. D'Urfey, like the cuckoo, makes it his business to suck other birds' eggs.

The cuckoo-like propensities are then demonstrated by Langbaine, who amply justifies Dr. Johnson's description of him as "the great detector of plagiarism," with a cruel minuteness which must have been painful to his victim.

Tom had a good deal of other criticism and satire to put up with. There is the inevitable reference in *THE DUNCIAD*: he is mockingly described as "a poet of vast comprehension, a universal genius and most profound learning" in the Epistle Dedicatory to *THE TALE OF A TUB*; and his good friend Richard Steele made fun of his aristocratic pretensions in the pages of *THE LOVER*. But Steele's fun was always good-natured. Tom Brown, who, for all his cleverness as rhymester, essayist, and translator, now shares D'Urfey's oblivion, speaks of him in no amiable fashion. "Thou cur, half-French, half-English breed," is his urbane manner of address in one place; elsewhere he satirically celebrates a bloodless duel fought by our poet at Epsom with a musician called Bell:

I sing of a duel in Epsom befell
"Twixt Fa-sol-la D'Urfey and Sol-la-mi
Bell.

The anonymous dialogue, *WIT FOR MONEY, OR POET STUTTER*, is the most elaborate satire he had to endure, and it is amusing in its way though ill-humoured. There are three interlocutors, Johnson, Smith and Stutter (D'Urfey). A move is proposed to

the Cross Keys tavern, but Stutter objects. "There's such a noise there always," says he; "the pit on my first day, or Billingsgate itself, might pass for quiet places to it." "Nay," retorts Smith, "one of your similes will serve, for I think the Playhouse was a Billingsgate then." Johnson, for his part, promises Stutter a bad time when he reaches the Elysian Fields and encounters the great men from whom he has plagiarised: "If in this world he were well served like Æsop's Jay and every bird should claim their feathers, how naked he would be."

It was on other grounds than plagiarism that Tom received his trouncing at the hands of the Reverend Jeremy Collier. As everybody knows, that redoubtable ecclesiastic startled the dramatic world by bursting into its midst, brandishing a bludgeon of morality with which he belaboured half a dozen great reputations. On Tom he bestowed some of his most resounding thwacks, devoting indeed a whole chapter of his *SHORT VIEW OF THE ENGLISH STAGE* to an examination of the former's play of *DON QUIXOTE*. The indictment is drawn up under three heads: the author's profanity, his abuse of the clergy, and his immodesty; and through about ten pages of close print the divine dogs the dramatist with eager nose. Cold controversy is an uninviting topic, but I must quote one instance of Dr. Collier's critical method, since it introduces the verses in which Tom D'Urfey reached his highest level. "Drolling on the Resurrection" was the critic's severe comment on the lines:

Sleep and indulge thyself with rest,
Nor dream thou e'er shalt rise again.

Tom's natural affability was turned to indignation by Collier's animadver-

sions, and, like Congreve and others, he adventured in print to confute the apostle of religion and purity. In the case in point he had little difficulty. The "horrible, severe, and rigid critic," he points out, has practised the old stratagem of removing lines from their context. The complete song in *DON QUIXOTE* from which they are quoted is as follows :

Sleep, sleep, poor youth, sleep, sleep
in peace,

Reliev'd from love and mortal care,
Whilst we, that pine in life's disease,
Uncertain blest, less happy are.

Couch'd in the dark and silent grave,
No ills of Fate thou now canst fear ;
No more shall tyrant power enslave,
Or scornful beauty be severe.

Wars, that do fatal storms disperse,
Far from thy happy mansion keep ;
Earthquakes that shake the universe
Can't rock thee into sounder sleep.

With all the charms of peace possest,
Secur'd from life's tormentor, pain,
Sleep and indulge thyself with rest,
Nor dream thou e'er shalt rise again.

Past are the pangs of fear and doubt,
The sun is from the dial gone,
The sands are sunk, the glass is out,
The folly of the farce is done.

It seems to me, I confess, that this elegy on a youth dead for love of his mistress has a certain noble gravity and pathos, admittedly not characteristic of D'Urfev, which might have saved it from Dr. Collier's onslaught and that its author's complaint is not unjustified. "Now will I be judg'd," he says, "by any reasonable man, if these words comparatively are not fitter for an anthem than a droll, but the Reformer's way of doing me justice is to take bits and morsels out of things, that for want of the connexion they may consequently appear ridiculous."

From the diatribes of a Collier it

is pleasant to turn to the gracious amenities of Addison, who came to Tom's assistance when the latter had more years than guineas. For he had fallen on evil days in the year of grace 1713. If money had come to him easily, it had with equal or greater ease flown away. He was, I fear, of an extravagant habit of life ; the society he kept was expensive ; he had a taste for fine clothes and the elegancies of existence,—he was, we are told, the last English poet to appear in the streets followed by a page—and he may have done a little gaming. Certainly he was fond of the turf and a familiar figure at Newmarket. Moreover he was a bachelor, which in his case probably meant that, instead of spending his money on one woman, he spent it on a score. Whatever the causes, Tom was in the result sore put to it for a living and much troubled by the importunities of duns. Some persons, however, laid their heads together and induced the management of Drury Lane to give a performance of his play *THE PLOTTING SISTERS* for his benefit. What was more, Addison, a fortnight previously had devoted a number of *THE GUARDIAN* to a charming plea for public support, which concludes with hearty eulogy.

After what I have said, and much more that I might say, on this subject, I question not but the world will think that my old friend ought not to pass the remainder of his life in a cage like a singing bird, but enjoy all that Pindaric liberty which is suitable to a man of his genius. He has made the world merry, and I hope they will make him easy so long as he stays among us. This I will take upon me to say, they cannot do a kindness to a more diverting companion, or a more cheerful, honest and good-natured man.

Apparently Tom did enjoy a measure of Pindaric liberty during the rest of his life, for when he died in

1723 he possessed a gold watch and a diamond ring, which he bequeathed to Steele to defray his funeral expenses. He was buried at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, where the tablet to his memory with the simple inscription, *Tom D'Urfey, Dyed Febry ye 26th, 1723*, may still be read. Nor did he lack fit epitaph. Some anonymous friend, probably a fellow-toper at the Queen's Arms in Newgate Street, Tom's favourite tavern, gave voice to his sorrow in the following lines, which were published in a volume of miscellaneous verses by various hands in 1726.

Here lies the Lyric, who, with tale
and song,
Did life to three score years and ten
prolong ;
His tale was pleasant and his song was
sweet,
His heart was cheerful—but his thirst
was great.
Grieve, reader, grieve, that he too soon
grew old :
His song has ended and his tale is told.

With this tribute to Tom D'Urfey's sweetness of song, cheerfulness of heart, and greatness of thirst, we may

leave him. He had a place to fill in the world, and he filled it to the satisfaction of his fellows. The worst wasted of all days, it has been said, is that during which we have not laughed. In history the maker of laughter deserves honour, as well as the metaphysician who gives us a headache and the epic poet who sends us to sleep. Tom amused his generation, and we cannot doubt that his generation was the better for it. He enjoyed the patronage of the one monarch in English history who could claim to be a connoisseur in pleasure and an amateur of wit ; he had the kindly hand of the gentle and subtle humourist of *THE SPECTATOR* and *THE GUARDIAN* to help him over stiles in his declining years ; he lived, one can conjecture, a happy if vagabond existence, with few to say a hard word of him ; his songs delighted his contemporaries. He was of no particular importance as a literary figure, he left no enduring work, and yet honest Tom did well. "The town may da-da-damn me for a poet, but they si-si-sing my songs for all that !"

WILLIAM G. HUTCHISON.

THE MYSTERY OF COLLABORATION.

(A PRACTICAL EXPERIMENT.)

THE Minerva Literary Society was languishing; indeed for some time past more than one of the members had been expressing their intention of resigning. There was perhaps not much danger of their really doing so, but the secretary, in the innocence of her heart, had asked the vicar to read a paper on Christian antiquities, on which he conceived himself to be an authority. Of course the worthy old gentleman welcomed his opportunity with joy, and for two hours and a half the unhappy society sat and listened to a learned, though contumacious, discourse on early methods of christening, marrying, and burying. But after it was over they fell upon the secretary with one accord, and promised that at the next meeting she should be severely censured, and another appointed in her stead.

It should perhaps be explained what the Minerva Literary Society was. It consisted of seven young ladies who had banded themselves together for the purpose of improving their minds on Thursday afternoons, and had been founded by the present secretary, Miss Delabere. This young lady had a cousin at Girton who had inspired her with an ardent desire for the higher, indeed for the highest, culture. Accordingly, when dispensing tea one day to three of her dearest friends, she suggested that they should form some society which might be of mental benefit to them. They were enraptured with the idea, and agreed that a literary society of some kind was what they had most

desired. The first and, as they naturally considered it, the most important question to be considered was the number of members. On a large sheet of paper they forthwith wrote down the names of all their acquaintances; and then they proceeded to eliminate them one by one according to their various disqualifications. Agnes, for instance, would always be wanting to introduce male visitors, and Isabel would be opposed to admitting any at all. Ethel had too good an opinion of herself, and May had too bad an opinion of other people. Finally they discovered that only three names on the list had nothing against them, and accordingly these three were duly elected. Seven was a highly fortunate number Miss Delabere explained; it recalled the Seven Sleepers and the Muses and lots of other literary things.

At this point Miss Gray interposed: she could not be quite sure, she said, how many Muses there were, but she knew it was not seven; it was more probably eight. This provoked a discussion. Miss Delabere was certain it was seven. She remembered them when she was at school, and proceeded to explain that they presided over the various branches of education which she had there studied. There were the Muses of mathematics, music, drawing, dancing, French, and German: that was six; what was the other? Oh yes, the Muse of callisthenics. Besides, had not Horatia told her so when she came back from

Girton! The others, though not convinced, allowed that Horatia's opinion carried a good deal of weight. Miss Paley ventured to suggest that, with all due deference to the learned cousin, she had heard, or read somewhere, that there were nine Muses. Miss Delabere did not dispute the fact that there might have been nine Muses once, but she was of opinion that the other two were dead. Her grandmother used to work samplers at school, she said, so there might have been a Muse of samplers, and perhaps another of deportment; but lawn-tennis and bicycles had killed them both. So it was decided that for present purposes seven Muses would do very well.

Then arose the next important question of a name for the Society. Miss Gray thought that it ought to be something classical, as they were following in the track of the Muses. How would the Venus Literary Society do? Miss Carter objected to Venus; it did not sound literary enough, she thought; it was more like a dancing-class. Having herself been educated at the Minerva College, she offered Minerva as a name suitable for consideration. Minerva was much approved, and forthwith adopted. They next proceeded to the election of officers and a committee. Miss Delabere's offer to act as secretary was gratefully accepted, Miss Gray was chosen president, while Miss Paley and Miss Carter occupied the less important (and less laborious) position of committee-women. The other three were to be ordinary members.

Invested with their new honours the friends felt better able to discuss the objects of the Society, and the lines on which it was to be managed. Miss Carter supposed that they ought to read some Shakespeare, and the others accepted the prospect as a

duty. Miss Delabere's suggestion of a monthly debate to relieve the tedium of perpetual reading was welcomed much more enthusiastically. Miss Paley also suggested that they should have a monthly paper dealing with events of national importance; she herself would be pleased to contribute an essay on the Origin and Evolution of the Toque. This happy proposal was universally applauded, and a note of Miss Paley's offer was made by the secretary. Then the minor details of subscriptions and so forth were decided, and the Minerva Literary Society was finally launched.

The great scheme was of course discussed at large by the outside world. The mothers of the members warmly approved of it, although their brothers and fathers were rather inclined to scoff. Harry Delabere, in particular, said that they were a lot of owls. The name caught, and in many quarters they were generally known as Minerva's Owls. However, they paid no attention to the scoffers, and their weekly meetings proved most successful. Miss Paley's paper on the Toque was said, by all who heard it, to be quite consummate, and the Society seriously considered the advisability of publishing Miss Baxter's essay on the Woes of Woman and the Mastery of Man. Occasionally too they had visitors. Miss Delabere's renowned cousin Horatia read a very able paper on the future of Women's Colleges, describing in graphic terms how women were gradually crowding men out of the great universities, and giving a striking picture of Trinity College as it is to be in the next century under female management. But by far the most famous meeting was when the long-haired Cyril Augustus Featherquill, author of *LYRICAL LAMENTS*, gave the society a paper on modern English poetry, illustrated by long and frequent

quotations from his own works. The members agreed afterwards that it was the finest thing they had ever heard, and even the guests invited for the occasion were full of praises.

Thus the Society had prospered exceedingly for more than a year. Then there came a relapse. It was Shakespeare that did it. In the annual report the secretary announced that in the course of the year there had been fifty meetings. At these meetings there had been thirty papers read, ten debates, five conversaziones with music and guests, and five readings; and of these five four had been given to Miss Marie Corelli and only one to Shakespeare. She ventured to point out to the Society, that they had not adhered quite strictly to the original plan, and in particular that Shakespeare had been somewhat neglected. The Society quite saw it, and in their anxiety to amend their ways passed a rash resolution to read six of Shakespeare's plays right off! They did it, but their patience was severely tried. It was just when they had finished the sixth play that the secretary asked the vicar to read his paper on Christian antiquities, with the result which we have seen. The next meeting was a scene of anarchy; every member rose in turn and made a long personal explanation, the substance of which was that the secretary ought to be ashamed of herself, and that the Society met for pleasure and not to hear long dull sermons. There was no business done in the way of a vote of censure, as, long before the usual time, the meeting had to break up, because the members were weeping too much to make any proposition at all. Tears are infectious, and the secretary went home and cried all night. Next day she was very pessimistic and opined that the Society had better cease; she had done her best for it and could do no more.

She was explaining this and other things to her mother, when her brother Harry came in. He regarded the thing as an excellent joke, and made sundry ill-advised remarks about having heard the hooting of innumerable owls in the night. Seeing, however, that his sister really took the matter very much to heart, he repented, and condescended to offer her some advice in a lordly way. "I'll tell you what it is," said he; "the owls are sighing for honour and glory, imperishable fame and that sort of thing. Why don't you make them write something and then get it printed? There's nothing like seeing yourself in print to put you in a good temper." Miss Delabere admitted, between her sobs, that the Society would like it, but was afraid that the friction was too great to permit of their listening to any proposal she might make. "Rot!" said Harry. "Go and make a cabal with Alice Carter, and get her to back you up; there's nothing like a cabal." His sister said that she would consider the matter, and finally resolved upon taking his advice.

In the afternoon accordingly she called on Miss Carter, and found that she, after a tearful night, was rather ashamed of herself, and not unwilling to listen to overtures of peace. So they kissed and made it up, with a few more tears to seal the compact, and then Miss Delabere divulged her plan. Miss Carter was delighted, and they settled at once on the cover of the book,—pale mauve, with swallows and daisies stamped in gold all over it. "But what are we to write?" she asked. Miss Delabere was not sure on this point. POEMS BY SEVEN MUSES, or DREAMS BY SEVEN SLEEPERS would be rather nice, she thought. Miss Carter doubted whether the Society would write very good poetry, and was quite sure it could not write dreams. "But what do people write,

when they want to write something and don't know what?" said Miss Delabere. "Novels, I suppose," answered her friend. Then they went into the subject of novels. Miss Carter had an aunt who wrote them, and knew, of course, how it was done. "It is quite easy," she said with conviction. "Aunt Emma just thinks out a title and then writes her book straight away. She does four or five every year and makes a lot of money out of them. If she can do them as quickly as that, seven of us ought to be able to write one a month." "But how are we to manage about it? And how about a plot?" "Oh, it doesn't matter about a plot. Study of character is the main thing in a novel nowadays. We must do it in this way. It must be in seven parts, and each of us must write a part. Then all we have to do is to add the parts together and the novel will be ready." "But don't you have any plot at all, or any hero or heroine, or any thing?" "Oh yes, we must have the same hero and heroine, and a sort of main plot which runs through all the parts, but we needn't worry too much about it; modern novels never do."

The plan sounded simple and inviting, and Miss Delabere finally agreed to propose at the next meeting that the Society should write a novel.

Next Thursday the Minerva Society met again. They were all rather silent and ashamed, and no one asked questions of the officers or displayed any interest in the business of the evening, until Miss Delabere asked permission of the President to introduce a motion. Having received it, she rose and spoke: "Miss President and ladies, I cannot help feeling that the honourable House is growing beyond itself; I mean, that it needs rather a wider scope for its energies than it has at present. You, Madam,

will doubtless agree with me, that the talent of honourable members, if properly directed, is capable of creating literary work which would be highly appreciated. (*Members wake up and applaud.*) Therefore it appears to me, and without doubt to you, Madam, that it would be little short of wrong for this House not to be handed down to posterity, as the creator of some literary monument. (*Loud applause.*) I therefore, with all due submission to the opinion of honourable members, propose that the Minerva Literary Society do write, and hereafter cause to be printed, a novel."

The members positively shrieked with delight, and of course the motion was carried by acclamation. Afterwards they showed their appreciation by passing a vote of confidence in their valued secretary. They then appointed a special committee of four, with Miss Delabere as chairwoman, to draw up a scheme for the writing of the novel, which scheme was to be presented at the next meeting. The Society broke up in the best of tempers, and it was a proud and happy secretary that went home that evening. She even went so far as to thank her brother for his advice, telling him that it had worked like a charm. He asked what they had decided on writing; was it a book of fashions? "No indeed," she said proudly; "we are going to embark on a work of fiction." At first he was incredulous, but when she assured him that it was really the case, he laughed immoderately and said with brotherly candour: "Well, all I can say is, you'll make bigger fools of yourselves than you did before."

During the next week the special committee met four times to discuss the novel and to draw up plans for its construction. The first meeting

was taken up with settling the title, on which point the committee found itself somewhat at variance. Miss Delabere and Miss Carter were minded to have a peaceful title which should give promise of tender love-scenes in the book, while the other two desired a title of a robuster order, presaging ghosts and deeds of darkness. Finally they had to settle on a compromise,—AGLIONE'S SWEET-HEART, OR THE WEIRD OF DEADLY GRANGE. Miss Evans reconciled them to the double title by pointing out that it offered a wide field to the members ; if they chose to indulge in the mysteries of love-making, with all its attendant joys and pains, the title sanctioned it, whereas for those who, like herself, desired to write in sterner vein, nothing could be more suitable than THE WEIRD OF DEADLY GRANGE.

At the next meeting they discussed the shape and length of the book. They agreed that it should be in seven parts, so that each member might have a freer hand. The length was a more difficult question. Miss Delabere, who had been making researches, thought that about seventy thousand words would be the proper length. Miss Baxter was afraid it would not be long enough, and it was absurd to limit seven people to almost as few words ; she thought a hundred and forty thousand was the least estimate that the Society would entertain. The other two had still larger views. Finally they had to leave the matter to the discretion of the members, saying that, within limits (but they did not state the limits) each member might write as many words as she pleased.

The last two meetings were occupied with the plot, which really seemed fairly easy to evolve. The heroine was of course to be called Aglione, with Middleditch for a surname. The

hero was to be named Cyril Augustus, suggested by the chairwoman with just the suspicion of a blush, and his surname was Ponsonby. He was to have a wicked uncle living at Deadly Grange, and two wicked friends from Oxford, with one good uncle and two good friends from Cambridge as a compensation. His parents were to be recalcitrant, as Miss Baxter suggested with relish. The heroine should have a wicked aunt and a good aunt, two wicked friends and two good ones, and her parents were also to be recalcitrant. The main idea of the story was to be the endeavours of the hero and heroine to get married, and the efforts made by the wicked people to prevent them, partly counteracted by the influence of the good people. Minor characters such as men-servants and maid-servants, policemen and hired villains, might be left to the discretion of the members. Deadly Grange was to be an old red brick mansion with a moat, and its Weird was to be shrouded in mystery. The different parts of the novel were to be drawn by lot, and the member who drew number one should write the first part and the member who drew number seven the last. Finally, the committee ventured to suggest that each member should have her part ready at the end of a month.

When the special committee handed in its report on the following Thursday the rest of the Society expressed themselves satisfied, and it was accepted *in toto*. They also passed a resolution that no conversation should be allowed on the subject of the novel until the various parts had been submitted in their complete form, and had been read aloud to the Society. This appeared necessary, for fear of plagiarism.

During the month that followed the young ladies were extremely busy,

and their families saw very little of them. But though they all wrote so diligently, the prescribed month came to an end long before they did. As a matter of fact it was not till four months were over that they professed themselves ready to send in their work. But at last they were all ready, and it was decided to hold an extraordinary meeting at which each member should read her part aloud. Miss Delabere, who had a sort of consciousness that her own part was a trifle longer than it ought to be, proposed that they should meet early, as it would probably take some considerable time to get through the whole book. The others accepted the suggestion eagerly, and it was decided that they should meet on the following Monday at ten in the morning, and read and discuss the book, if necessary, all day. They also decided that, as it was such an important occasion, each member might bring two friends.

When it became generally known throughout the neighbourhood that the novel was finished and to be read aloud, there was a good deal of excitement about it, and much competition to be among the favoured guests. The result was that when Monday arrived each member brought, not two, but four or five friends all eager to listen to the great work. The members themselves, it was noticed, looked a little flustered and uneasy, as though they were doubtful of the success of the entertainment. However, they arranged their guests in rows and took their own seats at the end of the room. Then the President rose and opened the meeting in a graceful little speech. She was gratified, she said, to see so many friends present, and she trusted that the Society was going to give a good account of itself. Not to waste time, she would call upon Miss Trevor, who

had the honour of opening the book, to begin. Miss Trevor, blushing a good deal and obviously very excited, extracted from some recess a sheaf of manuscript (which looked portentously large) and began.

She opened with a masterly account of Deadly Grange, giving a thrilling description of the moat, "Whose glassy translucent waves allowed the eye to penetrate into the realms of nothingness, a dark abyss, whose gloomy depths concealed the unending tortures of lost souls." She occupied several pages with a description of the garden, which was remarkable for the care and taste displayed in its arrangement, with its clipped yew hedges, its sloping terraces, and smooth lawns. Then she introduced the hero busily employed in playing lawn-tennis with the heroine and two of their respective friends. He was "rather above middle stature, with fair hair curling crisply all over his head;" she was "tall, dark, and Juno-like, and her glossy locks shone like a raven's wing." A pretty love-scene followed the lawn-tennis, in which the hero incidentally gave the heroine some account of his uncle, whose heir he imagined himself to be, and also of the Grange and of its Weird; the latter he did not allude to very circumstantially, but allowed it to be supposed that it was a grey-clad monk of malevolent temper. Finally the two young people engaged themselves, and the chapter ended in kisses. The next was a description of a dinner-party at the house of Aglione's father, in which the various characters of the book were severally introduced to the reader. The owner of Deadly Grange was a "sinister dark-looking man with thin lips, whose age might be anything from thirty to sixty." Aglione's wicked aunt, who sat next to him, was older than she looked, "and it was only by the use of cos-

metics that she had retained the reputation of being a handsome woman." Aglione's parents were commonplace, and Cyril Augustus's were not there. All their friends were there, however, and received a careful description, especially the wicked ones; the good uncle and the good aunt were also present. Then the writer proceeded to give a short but clear account of the various relations of all these people. The hero and heroine of course only wanted to marry each other. Her wicked aunt wanted to marry his wicked uncle, whereas he wanted and intended to marry Aglione. Aglione's wicked friends both wanted to marry Cyril Augustus, and his wicked friends both wanted to marry her. The good friends wanted to marry each other, as did the good uncle and aunt, and this simplified in some measure the action of the story.

It would be too long a task to give the contents of each chapter in detail, but in brief the story ran thus. At this eventful dinner-party the wicked uncle discovered that his nephew was also his rival in Aglione's affections, and the wicked aunt also discovered that her niece was her rival in the affections of the wicked uncle. Inspired by this knowledge they both determined on dark deeds. Aunt Emily (for that was her wicked name) conspired with Aglione's false friends to get the maiden out of their path. They tried several methods: first, they endeavoured to poison Cyril Augustus's mind against his love, but without success; next they hired a villain to kidnap her and, for a pecuniary consideration, to marry her. The villain made the attempt one evening, but Aglione's screams reached the ears of the hero's two friends, who stepped in and gave the villain a severe beating. Finally Aunt Emily in desperation made up

her mind to poison her niece. In the meantime the wicked uncle had been making attempts on his nephew. He tried first to marry him to an ugly heiress of prodigious expectations, whom Cyril Augustus indignantly refused. Then he cut him off with a shilling, at which Cyril Augustus laughed. Then he sent out against him certain bravos with bludgeons, and Cyril Augustus knocked them down. Finally he resolved to sacrifice him to the family Weird.

Matters had reached this pitch, when the bell rang for refreshments, as it was already one o'clock. Everybody congratulated Miss Trevor on her exciting story, especially Harry Delabere, who asked her how many more chapters there were. Only five more, she told him, at which Harry smiled enigmatically and retired.

After the interval Miss Trevor resumed her task. She extricated the hero and heroine from their difficulties. The wicked aunt tried to put poison into Aglione's cup of tea, but by mistake put it into her own, and died in awful agonies. The wicked uncle enticed Cyril Augustus into the haunted room at Deadly Grange and locked him in there, to be the prey of the Weird. Cyril Augustus, however, by dint of brave words and a revolver baffled the Weird and got out again, and when the wicked uncle returned, to see how it had fared with his nephew, he somehow shut himself in and could not get out. Next morning he was discovered dead in a corner, with his hair as white as snow. After this there was little left for the author to do, except to marry off the different people in the story, and this she did. The hero married the heroine, the good people married the good people, and, as a mutual punishment,

the wicked people married the wicked people. And then, amid great applause, Miss Trevor sat down.

There was silence for some time, and none of the members saw fit to make any remark, until the President collected her faculties and eventually rose. "We all, I am sure," she began, "are very grateful to Miss Trevor for her clever story, but of course she herself will be the first to realise that it will need a good deal of alteration if it is to be in harmony with the rest of the work." Miss Trevor rose indignantly, but was requested to defer her remarks until the debate on the subject. Then the President called on Miss Delabere to whom the second part had been entrusted. She had kept to her original idea of seventy thousand words, only modifying it in so far that she had written them all herself. Therefore it was considerably after tea-time when she had finished reading. She too received much applause, but the President had again to give a warning about the length and lack of cohesion of her effort. It was agreed that it was too late to listen to the third part that evening and they decided to meet again on the morrow, and voted that any of the guests who cared to come would be welcome; but there was an atmosphere of mutual suspicion about the members and they parted in silence. Harry Delabere, who had been taking notes in his pocket-book, was the most cheerful person in the room; he said that he would certainly come to-morrow, and every day for a week if necessary, at which the members looked at him doubtfully.

The morrow dawned and the Society again met to finish off the novel, before another large and appreciative audience. They found, however, that they could only get through two more parts, as Miss Paley and

Miss Evans, who had to read them, had taken full advantage of the generous limits allowed by the Society. It was decided that they must take another day, which extended itself to two, as Miss Baxter occupied the whole of the third day; in her part there were thirty-three love-scenes, all of some length.

In the meantime all the members felt rather as if they were sitting upon a volcano, which might begin operations at any moment. At the end of the fourth day, when Miss Gray had finished reading her part, which was the seventh and last, they sat and looked at each other in stony silence. The visitors were rather alarmed, and their alarm was in no way diminished when at last Miss Baxter said defiantly: "Well, at any rate *I* sha'n't alter or cut down my part a bit; I've taken too much trouble about it." The other members looked as if they privately held the same opinion about their own work, but still it was their duty to crush Miss Baxter, and they were just opening their mouths to do so when the President with a great effort saved the situation temporarily. "Ladies," she said, "it is rather late; perhaps we had better defer the discussion till next Thursday. Let us now have tea." So they had tea, and then went home.

For the account of the transactions at the last, and in many respects the greatest, meeting of the Minerva Literary Society we are indebted to the courtesy of Harry Delabere, who in some unexplained manner contrived to be present, and moreover to take minutes (impartial not secretarial minutes) which he has kindly put at our disposal. Thus we have been enabled to arrive at a fairly clear idea of what happened and of what the members said when it came to the point; and we think it is due to our

readers to put it before them as well as we can.

The novelists had had a week in which to think things over, but if they had had a month we doubt whether it would have made much difference to the ultimate issue, for it was obvious that from the first each one had steeled her heart against any weak compromise so far as she herself was concerned, and had determined that if any concessions were to be made, they must be made by the others. Bearing this in mind, then, we can hardly be surprised at the violence of the discussion. One thing we admit did surprise us: no one shed any tears at all; this at least is what our informant says, and he should know, as he is a person who is quick to notice matters of this sort. The explanation may lie in the fact that the subject was too serious for weeping, and it may be that the consciousness that they were now authoresses in their own right sustained them in the hour of trial.

They were all assembled on the following Thursday by half-past two in the afternoon, and the President opened the meeting without delay. She made use of the privilege of the chair to get in the first words, which from her own point of view was wise. "Ladies," she began, "it is no good preambuling; we all know why we are here, and it will be as well to get to the subject at once. As it stands at present the Society's novel will not do. I am not going to mince matters, and I must say what I think candidly. It is really absurd that you should all have made your parts so long. One honourable member has written at least a hundred and forty thousand words." Here five of the members applauded and cast glances of indignation at Miss Baxter. "But the rest of you are every bit as much in error.

None of you has written less than seventy thousand, and some more, and for purposes of collaboration this is just as foolish." Here Miss Baxter applauded and cast glances of withering scorn at the five members. "I myself have written about seventy thousand, but I maintain that it is the duty of the President to give a lead to the Society in a matter of this sort [here all six members murmured loudly] and therefore that I should have done so is not excessive. But each of you should have been contented with at most ten thousand words. As it is the total number of words written must be nearly seven hundred thousand, and who on earth would read a book of that length? I shall now be glad to hear any explanations or propositions that the members may have to offer."

Miss Gray's not over-conciliatory speech was received without favour, and for several minutes the members, so many at least as were not inarticulate with rage, cried *shame*, *nonsense*, and other things. At length weariness produced a lull and Miss Delabere arose to say a few words. "I do not in the least agree with you," she said to the President. "You ought to have written less than anybody, being President. But I want to call attention to another thing. I came second on the list, and one would think that the first person would have left me something to write. But she didn't. She married Aglione to Cyril Augustus and everybody else to somebody else, and she killed the wicked uncle and aunt, so of course my part is nonsense, as I have married them all over again and brought the wicked uncle and aunt to life again and sent them to penal servitude. I want to move a vote of censure on Miss Trevor."

Down she sat breathless, to be succeeded by Miss Paley. "I want

to say something, too," she cried. "It is all very well for Miss Delabere to talk like that. I should like to know what she thought she was leaving for me! If Miss Trevor has made nonsense of her part, she has made mine even worse, because when my turn came I had to marry lots of people for the third time. And what right had she to send the wicked uncle and aunt to penal servitude when I wanted them to use again? It seems so silly to have to use people who have been killed once and afterwards sent to penal servitude, and it makes my last chapter, where they die, quite worthless. I beg to second the vote of censure on Miss Trevor and to move another on Miss Delabere."

Thus spoke Miss Paley, and after her came Miss Evans with a long catalogue of woe; but her cry for vengeance came first. "I beg to second the vote of censure on Miss Delabere, and to move another on Miss Paley. She has done just the same for me as the others did for her. She has killed the wicked uncle and aunt just when I wanted them for Botany Bay. It was bad enough that the hero and heroine should have been married twice before, but after her marrying them my doing so makes it the fourth time. What authority had she for putting Deadly Grange in Yorkshire on the top of a mountain? It ought to be in Hampshire where I have put it." Here there was a slight diversion owing to Miss Trevor and Miss Delabere rising and saying that Deadly Grange was in Cornwall and Kent respectively. "I do not agree with the objections of the honourable members; it is in Hampshire. I thought it was arranged that the Weird should be shrouded in mystery. Why then did Miss Paley make so substantial a thing of it as a black coach with four black horses which drives up to

the front door at midnight? I say nothing about Miss Trevor's making a grey monk of it, or Miss Delabere's turning it into a mail-clad figure without a head, clanking spurs and things in the corridor. The coach is what I object to. How can one make a coach and four extract faint strains of music from a ghostly spinet, which is what the Weird does in my part? It is all nonsense!" And with this parting shot down sat Miss Evans.

She was followed by Miss Baxter, who was somewhat incoherent with indignation. "I think it is a great shame, and I haven't written so very much more than the rest of you, and why you should all have combined to make nonsense of my part I can't think. I'm sure I don't know what I have done to offend you, and there are all my beautiful love-scenes wasted because you've married them all, and people can't make love after they're married, and I beg to second the vote of censure on Miss Paley and to move another on Miss Evans, and I shall publish my part by itself."

To her succeeded Miss Carter who complained in much the same style, seconded the vote of censure on Miss Evans and moved another on Miss Baxter.

Last of all Miss Gray spoke again. She was in a state of subdued fury, both because as President she felt that she was to some extent responsible for the mistakes of the Society, and also because she had had the last part and so had suffered from them more. She spoke quietly, but with a sarcastic bitterness that was far more impressive than the outbursts of the others. "You are all very full of your own wrongs but you don't give a thought to me, your President, of whom you have made a complete fool. I took an infinity of trouble to write my part so that

it should do the Society credit, and what is the result? I shall be made the laughing-stock of the whole county. I will point out a few of your absurdities to you, that you may realise the silliness of it all,—if you can. Look what you have done to Thomas Brown, Cyril Augustus's wicked friend. Miss Trevor goes and marries him to May Smith, Aglione's wicked friend; Miss Delabere marries him to Aglione's Aunt Mary; Miss Paley marries him to the kitchen-maid; Miss Evans to Aglione's other wicked friend; Miss Baxter to one of her good friends; Miss Carter to the house-maid; and it seems to lack point when at last my turn comes and I marry him to Aglione's Aunt Emily. Then look at Aglione and Cyril Augustus. Every one of you marries them at the end of your parts, and how can I leave them to pine in single wretchedness when they have been married six times? It isn't decent! And then Aunt Emily and Uncle Henry! Three of you send them to Botany Bay and three of you kill them. Where do I come in? How can I leave them alive and well and enjoying the fruits of their crimes after that? It spoils one of my most powerful bits. As for your ghosts, I've no patience with them. Do you mean to tell me that the ones Miss Evans talked about, and Miss Baxter's little old lady, and Miss Carter's banshee are the same as my gentleman in evening-dress who shoots himself in the library every night when the clock strikes twelve? I did think you had more sense than that! The only words of sense you have spoken to-day have been when you moved votes of censure on each other, which I now declare carried. As for you others, you may do as you like; I shall send

my part off to a publisher to-morrow. I don't suppose any of you will get yours accepted, but you might publish at your own expense. I declare this meeting closed."

Miss Gray's speech had been punctuated by angry cries and objections, as might be expected, and the babel that arose when she finished was, so our informant says, absolutely deafening. But she had left her seat and had gained the door, and there was nothing to be done but to request Miss Delabere to take the chair, and this she emphatically declined to do. So amid indescribable confusion the meeting broke up for the last time.

Thus it was that the Minerva Literary Society ceased to be, and this is why none of those who formerly composed it are now on speaking-terms. On the whole, however, the world is a gainer, for had it not been for the dissolution of the Society, Messrs. Type and Forme might never have been able to announce the batch of important new novels which has recently gladdened our eyes.

AIGLE, a tale of England; by Paolo Trevorski.

CYRIL AUGUSTUS'S SWEETHEART; by D. L. Burton.

THE GRANGE WEIRD; by Horace Palast.

AGLIONE, a tale of Horror; by Evan Evans.

DEADLY MOAT; by Hermann Bagster.

THE UNCLE, OR TRUE LOVE; by Francis Cartaret.

THE AUNT'S CURSE; by Lambert Grayling.

The same publishers, by the way, also announce a book of some importance to literary amateurs: *THE WHOLE ART OF NOVEL-WRITING, A Manual for Beginners*; by H. D.

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XXVII.

POLLY said it was quite unnecessary for Bill to go to old Mr. Harborough's funeral, though the wish to do so showed a nice feeling on her part; and since she did wish it (and had a black dress) there really was no reason why she should not go, more especially as she was leaving for London the next day and would thus escape Miss Minchin's cross-questioning. But Gilchrist had other opinions; he strongly disapproved of Bill's going, seeing no reason for it and a great many against it. He himself had never claimed any connection with the Harboroughs during the old man's life and did not intend to do so at his death, except through the medium of the law. He said he should consider it an impertinence on his own part to go to the funeral. Bill agreed with him as to the propriety of his staying away, but persisted in going herself. Gilchrist became really angry, and told her it was absurd to go simply because Mr. Harborough had given her the diamond shoe-buckles; people who did not know the circumstances might put another construction on her actions. Bill said she did not mind that, and also that the shoe-buckles were only part of her reason for going.

"What other reason is there?" he asked.

"I want to speak—" she began and then broke off. "Oh, I can't tell you," she said impatiently. "I don't mind your knowing if only I had not the bother of explaining; as it is, I really can't go into it. You say so much about things, ask so many questions, see so many motives, and foresee so many consequences, that I really shall be obliged to give up telling you. I don't mind your knowing, and up till now I have told you things; but I am afraid I shall have to begin taking you in to save trouble."

"Do you know what you are saying?" was the beginning of Gilchrist's not unnaturally severe answer; the end was less pacific. However, there was no quarrel between them, but he was exceedingly angry with her sayings then, and even more so with her doings later on, for she went to the funeral in spite of him. It was not easy to quarrel with Bill, as she did not retaliate and did not mind; but also, as Polly knew, she could not be moved, quietly taking her own course unless you could convince her it was wrong; "and Gilchrist can't convince her," Polly said after the affair of the funeral. She herself advised Bill not to go when she found how strong was Gilchrist's opposition; but it did not make the slightest difference. Bill had promised Kit she would go, and she went.

It was soon after five on the afternoon when old Mr. Harborough died that Kit found the girl in the wood; yet it was nearly nine when she reached Haylands. The intervening time was not entirely occupied in the drive home, nor yet in the conversation concerning the reason for Bill's tears. Most of that conversation was carried on while she was half buried in the ferns; but there was another and a longer one when she faced the facts of the case in the old library. Indeed, after a while her position and Kit's were to a certain extent reversed; it was she who comforted and planned, arraying the future in its best colours, he who at first declined to see hope anywhere, even though he faced that future with much apparent indifference.

Truly, as Bill was forced to admit, the future did not look promising. Both from what she had learned from Gilchrist,—and she had made many inquiries of late—and from what Kit had heard from the solicitor and confided to her now, she could not help seeing that the case looked bad against him. Even if a will existed,—and Kit seemed to think that by no means likely—it would do little more than complicate the case without giving him a title to the estates, unless he could make good his uncle's title first. He told her all he knew about it, and she returned the compliment; but they cannot be said to have advanced matters very much or come to any resolution. Of course, Kit was going to win the lawsuit,—that was a foregone conclusion—but Bill, whose universe was always constructed with a convenient backdoor for use when foregone conclusions failed, strongly recommended him to consider how he would stand if the impossible were to happen. And it must be admitted that, if the cata-

strophe really took place, he would not stand very well, for with Wood Hall and all it entailed gone there was not a great deal left; briefly, a hundred a year inherited from his mother, a liberal education and studious tastes which together had enabled him to take a good classical degree at Oxford in the previous summer, and had further allowed him to study modern languages and literature with rather more than usual thoroughness. These, besides youth and health, were the only passably serviceable possessions he could claim. There was a taste for writing poetry and an aptitude for translating Greek verse, but neither was any use; there were several other tastes which were no use, and yet others which were positively detrimental.

"I am afraid you would find it awfully hard," Bill said once. She felt a compassion which was almost motherly for him in his ignorance of the shifts and turns of the genteel poverty in which she had been reared.

"No harder than other people," he answered rather curtly.

Bill knew better. A hundred a year would have been wealth to her and Polly; sixty between Bella and Theresa seemed almost a fortune; however, she did not say so, but talked of small privations instead.

"You would not be able to have a clean shirt every day," she said, and Kit winced at the mention of such sordid trifles. "Washing costs such a lot," the girl went on; "besides it wears things out. You would not be able to have an evening paper if you had a morning one, and you certainly would not be able to have many new books; you would have to have your boots mended over and over again, and think what tips you would give the porters. Saving in big things is not so hard; it is the little things you would hate, filing the edges,—you

have to file the edges when you are making money or saving it either—it would set your teeth on edge horribly, I'm afraid."

"Not more than it does yours," Kit retorted.

But Bill did not agree with him. "It does not hurt me," she said; "I'm used to it and my people have been used to it; we have been poor long enough not to mind about these things. Besides, I love work; I don't care much what it is; I like to do things, and I don't care what I do. I am afraid, too, I am not so very refined; things that would hurt you don't hurt me; I don't believe I have got very ladylike tastes."

But Kit turned on her here: in his opinion she was the most perfect lady living, not even she herself should question it in his hearing; and for a time the conversation became personal, but eventually it returned to the original subject. Bill learned a good deal of Kit's history that day,—of his mother, dead rather more than a year but beloved and tenderly revered, as indeed she deserved to be seeing that he owed to her all the better part of himself,—of the quiet life at Bybridge, the red Queen Anne house with the walled garden, the pleasant homecomings there to the widowed mother,—the student's days at Oxford, the travels in continental cities, tales of times and sights which fired Bill's ready imagination and set her gipsy blood aflame to be free to wander and to see and learn. In their interest in these tales both listener and narrator almost forgot the graver matters before them. But there were other things, memories of still earlier days which brought them back, the recollection of boyish days spent at Wood Hall, holidays when the parents were abroad and silently and unconsciously there grew in the young mind that love of the old place which is as

an entail binding one generation to the next.

Bill listened greedily, forgetting all about home and Gilchrist who was waiting for her there. At last, however, she did remember and somewhat hastily departed, feeling that in this talk of the past they had rather neglected considerations of the future. Before she went she promised she would come to the funeral, partly to remedy the omission of that evening, and partly to do honour to the old man who would not have many real mourners.

In one respect, however, Bill made something of a mistake, for she had that day without knowing it helped Kit Harborough for the future. Unconsciously she had preached to him the gospel which was so completely incorporated into her own nature that she did not even know she believed it,—the gospel of work;—the delight and satisfaction in work for its own sake irrespective of kind or place, just doing for the sake of doing, and doing now, not waiting the time and opportunity for a great work, but setting to at once on the nearest thing that offered. Not lamenting because the beautiful edifice of faith or hope has tottered and fallen, but taking, instead, stones from the ruin to build a shelter while the plans for some greater work are maturing.

Bill did not think these things; she did not even know she believed them; only she unconsciously translated them into action, and as unconsciously, by her words and by her attitude of mind, preached them to Kit.

She went to the funeral and stood respectfully on the outskirts of the group which gathered in the little churchyard in Wood Hall park. She did not attach herself to the party, feeling herself an alien, but Kit, who

as recognised heir was chief mourner, saw her though he could not come to her till a good deal later in the afternoon. She had said she would wait for him among the beeches, and she did wait, for a time almost forgetting him in the exquisite perfection of the silent October wood. When at last he came they finished the conversation begun the other day, and they did not hurry over it unduly. Bill knew that Gilchrist and the cousins would be angry with her late return, but so angry that half an hour one way or the other would make no difference.

Before the interrupted conversation was resumed Kit told her a piece of news which at first seemed of great importance to her, though afterwards she was obliged to agree with him in not attaching too much value to it. It appeared that old Mr. Harborough had made a will after all, and by the terms of it Kit would, were it not for the Australian, succeed to the property exactly as he used to anticipate.

Bill clasped her hands with excitement. "Oh, I am so glad," she said.

"So am I, although I don't think it will make much difference to the case."

"You don't?"

He shook his head but repeated that he was glad, and there was a few moments' silence before Bill said softly: "I am so glad you did not speak about the will; it has happened without your speaking; you were right and I was wrong."

Kit did not agree with her there, thinking they had been of one mind on the subject of the will; but they did not discuss the point at length, turning instead to the consideration of Kit's future, should the case be decided against him.

Doubtless if this really occurred his friends and relations would find

or do something for him; but he and Bill planned, curiously though practically, without considering the relations at all. Bill's plans seldom depended on outside help, and usually, however absurd, had the merit of being such that they could start working at once. She was rather anxious that Kit should start at once, for, as she said, if he could earn anything the money would be no disadvantage should the case go in his favour, and a decided advantage should it go against him. The only difficulty was to find anything he could do in his present circumstances and with his modest talents.

"You could teach," Bill said doubtfully, having but a poor opinion of that refuge of the destitute; "with your degree you could get a mastership, but then I suppose your people would not like it; besides, it would be rather awkward for other reasons. You might get some translating to do, as you know languages pretty well. I believe it is awfully hard to get, and not well paid; still it would be better than nothing, and if it is really so difficult to get, it would be just as well to see after it before the need comes; you would be ready then if it did come. You said it might take as long as two years to settle about Wood Hall! In two years you ought to be able to get a little translating, I should think."

Kit thought so too, and they talked over ways and means, he telling her sundry youthful dreams, she listening with admiring sympathy not untouched with practical common-sense. Eventually he did make a start as she suggested, and finding, as they feared, that such work as he could do was almost impossible to obtain, he turned, till it came, to one of the youthful dreams and translated some of the lesser known dialogues of Lucian into sound scholarly English. And though

even his inexperience could not but tell him that the work, when done, would not be a marketable commodity, the doing of it was a great satisfaction to him. Later, through the good offices of a college friend, he got a German book on botany to translate, and very uninteresting work he found it. Nevertheless, because it was the first work he had ever been paid for, he was pleased with it, and so pleased with the small sum he received for it that he invested the whole in a large crystal of rough amethyst, remembering how rapturous Bill had been in her admiration of the small crystal he had shown her in the collection of such specimens at Wood Hall. When, however, it came to the point of sending his crystal to the girl his courage failed; afraid of displeasing her he put the amethyst away, and no one knew of its existence for a long time.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BUT all this happened later and had no part in the conversation on that October afternoon. It must be admitted, however, that if the conversation had entirely confined itself to plans for the future, Bill would have reached home earlier than she did. Some chance reference to the shoe-buckles and the value Polly put upon them brought Peter Harborough to her mind, and with him the recollection of the grave-stone at Sandover and its record of his tragic death. Who Peter Harborough was, and how he died, were questions which perplexed her on the Sunday afternoon when she saw his grave; they returned to her with redoubled interest now that his buckles had come into her possession; and she sought information of Kit.

He could tell her little more than that the man was the younger

brother of old Mr. Harborough's grandfather, and as such should have succeeded to the property if death had not intervened. "He was great friends with the Corbys; it was at Corby Dean he was shot," Kit concluded.

"I know, but who shot him? Was it one of the Corbys, or did he do it himself?"

"No one knows, but his brother apparently was satisfied that it was all right; he asked no questions, took the property, and said nothing."

Bill pondered the matter for a minute. "Which Corby was it?" she asked. "I mean with which one was he friendly and played cards? What relation was he to Roger Corby, the old Squire?"

"It was Roger Corby himself," Kit told her; "Roger, the last of them."

"Roger Corby, himself," Bill repeated. It was curious how she seemed to stumble upon fragments of this man's history. She tried vainly to piece out his life, but she had so little to go on. At length she said: "But he was not the last of them; he had a granddaughter who out-lived him."

"She can hardly be counted."

"But why? I suppose she could have taken the property if there was any, even if she did marry and change her name."

"There was nothing to take; in fact the old squire was so much in debt at his death that, although they sold all that was left of the property, it was little more than enough to pay everything off. Of course there was not much to sell then; there was little about here; Corby Dean, the house near Bybridge, was heavily mortgaged and nearly tumbling down, and most of the land near Sandover and Bybridge had already been disposed of."

"You mean where Sandover now

stands? It belongs to Mr. Briant now, doesn't it? By the way, you must have been staying with him at Bymouth, for you were staying at the River House and that is where he lives. Polly found out; she always asks about the people who live in the big houses."

Kit said he had been staying with Mr. Briant and added: "It was the grandfather of that man who first had the land from Roger Corby. It was not worth much then, the present owner being the one who has developed it so tremendously; still even at that time it was a good lot for a man with the old squire's income to give to his steward."

"His steward? Was Mr. Briant's grandfather Roger Corby's steward?"

"Yes; steward or bailiff or something of the sort; at least he was at one time, but he left his service and went abroad, I think soon after Peter Harborough was shot."

Bill considered the matter a moment. "And Roger gave him the land?" she asked at length.

"Something very like it; he granted it to him absolutely subject only to some nominal rental payable if demanded, and that practically amounts to a gift, at least to the first owner if not to his children."

"Roger Corby must have had some reason," Bill said with conviction.

Kit agreed with her, though he could not say for certain what it may have been. "Briant was steward at Corby Dean when Peter Harborough was shot," he said; "that may have had something to do with it. But whether he knew something about it and threatened to speak, or whether he did not know and only threatened, to make a charge which Roger Corby could not disprove because of the secrecy of the affair, I could never find out. Of course it is all very long ago now,

and people do not seem to take much interest in such things as a rule."

This was said almost apologetically, as if the speaker were ashamed of his own interest; but he need not have apologised to Bill, who was herself more fascinated by these tales of the past than he was.

"It was an awful lot to give," she said at last, "but I suppose he had no choice. I wonder why he put in the nominal rental; has it ever been demanded, do you know?"

"I should not think so; there has been no one to demand it. I expect that it was put in so that it might be possible for the Corbys eventually to recover the land at the end of the time for which it was granted. But it does not matter much now, for there are no more Corbys."

"But the granddaughter," Bill asked, "what became of her? Did she not marry and have children?"

"She married but had no children; I don't think anybody knows what became of her."

"Did she run away?" Bill thought it just possible, considering what was told of her childhood, that this last of the Corbys might have run away if her fate demanded that solution of a difficulty.

"Yes, that is it," Kit said; "she ran away from her husband. I don't know the name of the man she went with, but they say she was never very fond of her husband, and I should think she must have been rather difficult to deal with; my uncle knew her, and he always spoke as if she were. The man she married was younger than she, a clergyman—but you know him, I expect you know all this; at least you must have heard something of Mr. Dane's wife?"

"Mr. Dane!" Bill exclaimed, her eyes growing wide. "Was she his wife? His wife—and he would have loved her so! Oh, Monseigneur, poor

Monseigneur!" and her voice took the almost tender wail of a primitive woman who mourns her loved ones.

"Did you not know?" Kit asked, trying to remember if she had expressed pity for his troubles in that tone.

She shook her head. "I knew he had been married," she said, "though people at Ashelton usually speak as if he had not; perhaps they don't know. He never speaks about his wife, so I thought she must have died very long ago."

"She did, or rather she left him long ago, forty years or more. I am surprised you did not know, though now I come to think of it, people about here hardly would; it did not happen here, and Mr. Dane did not come to Ashelton till some time afterwards. Wilhelmina Corby had not lived here since she was quite a young girl, and there was nothing to connect Mr. Dane with her in people's minds."

"Was her name Wilhelmina? Then I wonder he puts up with me! I am Wilhelmina; he ought to hate me. He ought to do that for several things; I asked him something yesterday I would never have asked had I known this."

"What was it? Will you tell me?"

Bill hesitated a moment before she said: "Yes, if you like. I asked him what he did when things went utterly wrong with his life, when"—the girl's tone had taken a passionate ring as if the occasion were not entirely impersonal—"when he felt like Job's wife and wanted to curse God and die because things were so hopelessly, incurably wrong."

"Why did you ask?"

The words were uttered almost before Kit knew what he said. When they were once spoken, he

would sooner have bitten his tongue through than that they should have been said.

She sat silent for a long moment pulling the fern to pieces in her hands; when at last she did speak it was to repeat to him, with a curious quietness, Mr. Dane's words to herself.

"He said," so she told him, "'on such a day as you speak of I shut a door in my mind and went away without speaking or looking back; afterwards I played cricket at the school-treat, and I think I played as well as usual.'"

That was all she said; after she had spoken there was a great silence in the yellow wood, except when the beech-nuts fell pattering on the dead leaves, and the robins, the year's grandchildren, sang shrill and sweet in the branches.

At last she spoke again, scarcely above a whisper now: "I think I am going to try to do that."

Kit turned and faced her; there was a faint flush on his cheek, but his eyes met hers unflinchingly—"And I too," he said; and then they walked on in silence.

CHAPTER XXIX.

It is an old saying, and doubtless a good one, that two is company and three none; yet the presence of a third person who stands somewhat apart from the other two is frequently a great assistance to domestic happiness and a great preventive of domestic friction. Polly took Bill to London during the first week in October and Theresa missed her at every turn. There was no one to play *bélique* with Robert in the long dull evenings; Theresa hated cards, and though she tried to play from a sense of duty her skill was so small that her efforts were a failure. There was no one to talk and amuse him

when he came in at odd times; Theresa was somewhat silent by nature, and she did not seem to have grasped the details of his work. She could not remember the points of his horses or the names of his dogs; it all came natural to Bill who, Theresa reflected, had less on her mind and so of course might be expected to remember better. She missed the girl herself, too, in the dairy and store-room, in the house and orchard and garden. She missed her when the late apples fell, and when the dead leaves gathered thick in the garden; she missed the all-pervading sunshine of her nature, and she missed the regular visits Gilchrist Harbrough used to pay on Bill's account.

Of course she had nothing but the most impersonal interest in Gilchrist, —no one, not even Polly had suggested otherwise, though Theresa flushed as she remembered what Polly had suggested—still it was pleasanter when he used to come. If Bill had been here he would have come to-night; it was one of his evenings. Robert had gone to a political meeting at Wrugglesby and would not be home till late, and Theresa sighed a little, to think of the weary number of hours before her. She wondered a little, over her sewing, if Gilchrist had gone too.

But Gilchrist had not gone to the political meeting; he did not even know Robert had gone, for he came to Haylands that evening to speak to him, and finding he was not at home, came in to leave a message with Theresa. She was sincerely glad to see him, and he, to judge from his manner, was sincerely glad to be there again. To tell the truth he too missed those pleasant evenings at Haylands, the refinement and indescribable femininity of the house appealing to him in a way that surprised even himself.

"One needs a woman about a place," he reflected that evening when he went once more to the house and found that though Bill was gone, the femininity remained,—flowers, needlework, delicate womanly atmosphere, all as before, all as attractive. It must be admitted that he did not expect otherwise, for to him Bill did not suggest such things; she could arrange flowers as well as grow them, and she often sat at needlework when he saw her, sewing very strongly, very intently; yet to him there was something unfeminine in the very energy with which she did the smallest things. Theresa,—he did not think much about Theresa, except to decide that it was an advantage to be sure what a woman meant, and sometimes what she thought, advantages he did not feel he possessed with regard to Bill.

She, it is true, had been surprisingly docile of late, but her docility was flat and uninteresting, and there was besides an uneasy feeling in Gilchrist's mind that he did not know what lay behind. He did not feel that he had grasped Bill at all. He had been exceedingly angry on the occasion of Mr. Harbrough's funeral, and there had followed an interview with Bill which should have been stormy. It was not, however; Bill was truly sorry for having annoyed him so much, confessed her sins, and promised more respect for his wishes in future. She was honestly trying to do her duty now, and to behave in the way she ought. Gilchrist did not altogether believe in her repentance, which was perhaps not unnatural; and when she confessed herself wrong, he agreed with her and accepted her self-accusations as a matter of course. It is sometimes a pity to accept another's self-accusations so readily; just it may be, but it is not always encouraging. Fortunately it mattered less to

Bill than to most people and peace was patched up between them, though things were not perhaps in the most satisfactory state when she left for London. Had the engagement not rested on something more reliable than mutual affection it would hardly have been wise of Polly to take the girl to London, for in spite of her faults, she had a species of fascination for Gilchrist when she was present, and when she was absent there was Theresa to consider.

However, about that time Gilchrist did not give much attention to either Theresa or Bill, for the opening of the Harborough lawsuit occupied most of his thoughts. It also occupied the thoughts of his neighbours, and was looked upon as a matter of tremendous local interest; Ashelton even split into factions over the question of the justice or injustice of the claim, of which, in fact, very little was generally known. Mr. Stevens was much pressed for information, or at least for his opinion as to the probable issue, but though he had no professional connection with either party he maintained a discreet silence. He once went so far as to say that a lot of good money would be wasted by two young men who could ill afford it, and that without knowing a great deal more than he now knew he should be sorry to bet on either. This discreet opinion was more moderate than those held by most of his neighbours.

Theresa knew little more than the rest of the village on the great subject of the Harborough claim, for Gilchrist had not had time to explain it to her since the case opened, and before that time he had thought it wiser to keep silence even with members of Bill's family.

"Not that I minded you knowing," he said to Theresa the night Robert went to the political meeting. "I had

not the least objection to that, only I was afraid if Bill told you she would also tell Miss Haines, and she, you know, is perhaps not quite so discreet. I am sure she would not mean to betray a confidence, but she talks a good deal, and people who do that often say more than they intend."

In this he scarcely did Polly justice, for though she might betray a secret it was not by accident nor through foolishness. But Theresa said she understood, and led him to talk of his chances of success. He was very cautious and would not commit himself at all, but she persisted in speaking as if a favourable issue were certain.

"Fancy little Bill mistress of such a place as Wood Hall!" she said, when at last she had in her own mind brought all to a satisfactory conclusion. She was evidently delighted with the idea, but this particular side of the termination was exactly what Gilchrist did not fancy; however, he only replied to Theresa by saying with a smile: "Things have not quite reached that point yet, and I almost doubt if Bill expects them to do so; she hardly seems to quite realise what the position would be if they did."

"I expect not. She little thought when once or twice she went to see old Mr. Harborough that she herself might one day live at Wood Hall. It will take her a long time to get used to the idea; she is such a child."

That was not her worst complaint in Gilchrist's eyes, but he only said, "Time will cure that."

It was just then that there came the sound of a stumble in the passage. Theresa started from her chair. "I did not hear Robert's horse," she exclaimed. "I—you—I'm afraid—"

Gilchrist had heard that heavy stumble, that muttered oath before; he had reached the door as soon as

she and put out his hand to open it first.

"I am afraid Robert is not well;" she faced him unflinchingly with the lie. "Will you excuse me? I must go to him—good-night;" and she passed out leaving him alone.

Bill had been right; she had found him out, and she stood between him and all the world, hiding his fall with her pitiful little pretence. And he—Gilchrist ground his teeth in impotent rage as he walked home through the darkness that night—what was he to receive such loyalty, such service!

It was perhaps fortunate for Gilchrist Harborough that he had a good deal to think of just now; the lawsuit absorbed a large proportion of his time and interests, and it was just as well that it did, for, although it prevented him from paying much attention to Bill, it also prevented him from paying much to other subjects which were better let alone. After the evening when he saw Theresa he devoted himself more assiduously than ever to the matter of the suit, and so really absorbing did he find it that, though he was in town pretty often that autumn, he was not once able to spare an hour to go to Bayswater to see Bill. However, about the beginning of December he fancied he should be able to manage it, and wrote to tell her that he hoped to come.

Bill and Polly had been well established now for some time, for they did not take long settling down, though the process had not been all that Polly had anticipated. If the truth must be known, her position now was not altogether unlike that of the old magician who, having raised a spirit to help him in his schemes, finds the obliging goblin to be of such unexpected magnitude that it proves not only embarrassing

but likely to constitute itself master instead of servant. Polly's spirit, very obliging, very hard-working and even-tempered, presented one serious drawback,—it would rule. It was useless for Polly to attempt any of the little shifts dear to her heart; Bill, who knew her, was equal to them all, and forestalled her in the pleasantest but completest way possible. Once or twice at the beginning of the partnership Polly threatened to turn her all too active partner out, but she never did it. Probably she never seriously thought of it, for Bill was very useful; there was no need to employ a girl with Bill in the house, no need to have either a boot-boy or a charwoman; no need for Polly herself to do more than a very moderate share of the work. Bill also got on well with the lodgers and with the tradespeople, and, when once they two had got to understand their relative positions, excellently well with Polly herself.

Bill had altered in several ways besides in this development of the ruling spirit. Polly found her quieter than she used to be, on the whole more a woman and less a child, though she occasionally lapsed into her old ways. She had shut a door in her mind, and was trying hard to do well the thing which came next. It was easy enough when it was housework or cooking; she did them to the best of her ability, too well, in fact, according to Polly, who was no advocate for superfluous thoroughness. But there were other things she tried to do which were not easy; she was trying in somewhat adverse circumstances to be more of a lady, more like Theresa to please Gilchrist, more like the gentlewoman of Mr. Dane's definition to please herself.

On the whole the cousins lived happily and let their rooms with a fair amount of success. Polly's lot

was occasionally brightened by a hamper from Haylands, occasionally also shaded by the loss of a paying lodger or the all too previous departure of one who had not paid. But in the beginning of December when Gilchrist came to town things were not very prosperous; the rooms had been empty some time, the cold weather had set in early, and the fog, which preceded and sometimes accompanied the frost, was both depressing and likely to be expensive in gas. Polly economised in candle-ends, bemoaning her fate, and then indulged in buttered muffins "to cheer us up." It was on the occasion of the muffins that Bill received Gilchrist's letter.

"I wonder if he is going home again the same night," Polly speculated. "He had much better stay here,—there is plenty of room. I shall ask him; it will be more correct for me to do it than for you."

Bill did not know why it was more correct, but knowing Polly liked these small details she raised no objection, and in due time the invitation was given and accepted. Polly was much pleased, being genuinely hospitable and moreover very proud of her dingy little house; she also thought a great deal of Gilchrist since the matter of Wood Hall had come to her knowledge, and she prepared for his reception accordingly. The best bed-room was made ready, the best sitting-room set in order. Bill did most of that, but Polly, with an eye to effect, brought their work-baskets and books from the kitchen, where they were usually kept.

"We must make it look as if we sat here always," she said, as she put a reel of cotton on the mantel-piece.

"Then we must bring the cat," Bill replied, "for he always sits with us. But it is rather nonsense; why

should not Gilchrist know we live in the kitchen? He knows that somebody must do the work, and he won't think the worse of us for doing it."

But Polly thought otherwise. "It was different when he was only a working farmer," she said. "Now, since all this about Wood Hall has happened, he won't look at it in quite the same way."

"I don't see any reason for pretending, when he knows that we work."

"He knows it in a general way, but it is one thing to know it and quite another to see it being done."

With which incontestable opinion Polly closed her remarks and carried her point, and when Gilchrist came soon after six o'clock the best sitting-room looked as snug as though it were the family's habitual living-room. Bill had on her best frock and her best manners, and everything was as pleasant as possible. Polly was delighted; she had been a little afraid that Gilchrist, in his position of claimant to the Wood Hall estate, might wish to make a more advantageous marriage than the one in prospect. She was very much afraid that he might use the private and not very binding nature of the engagement as an excuse to repudiate it, or to induce Bill to release him. But on that December evening she was perfectly satisfied, he and Bill evidently understanding one another, and Bill behaving beautifully; she was so gentle and submissive, she might almost have been anybody.

Polly, in spite of her low financial ebb, had prepared what she called a "tasty supper" in honour of the guest. It was not altogether unlike her millinery—an ingenious makeshift finished off with a few new trimmings, but it was undeniably successful. She was very gratified by its success and by things in general, and it was

with a cheerful countenance that she withdrew after the meal.

"I know you must have a lot to talk about," she said, beaming upon the other two; "and as I have some letters to write, I think I will go and do them down-stairs."

So she went, though the letters resolved themselves into the supper-things which she washed, while upstairs Gilchrist told Bill all about Wood Hall and the progress of the case, which was not rapid, and his opinion of the rival claimant, which was not enthusiastic. Bill listened and answered as sympathetically as she could, though it is possible she would rather have been washing dishes in the kitchen. Still she did her share in the conversation admirably, and when they spoke of things other than those concerning Wood Hall she was really splendid in her efforts to be like Theresa. Nevertheless Gilchrist did not commend her improvement; perhaps he was not satisfied with it, nor with the submissive girl who was trying so hard to please him.

Bill felt the failure when she went to bed that night. "I expect it did not ring true," she thought; "I must try to feel like Theresa as well as behave like her. I'll do it in time; I believe I could be anything if I tried long enough." And so she fell asleep, resolutely trying to school herself to what she conceived to be Theresa's attitude of mind. She woke next morning with the same thought uppermost and continued her practice of what she called "Theresaing" her mind while she cleaned the guest's boots in the basement.

CHAPTER XXX.

At breakfast that morning Gilchrist said he should not leave for Wrugglesby until the six o'clock train.

Bill felt a pleasurable expectancy; perhaps he would suggest that they two should go for a walk somewhere; she knew where they would go, the British Museum was free to all comers and they would go there and look at all the mummies. There was so little work to do now, Polly would not mind, and it would be very nice.

Gilchrist said he had business which would occupy him during the morning. That was natural, but the afternoon—Polly supposed, with an affable smile, that he "would want her to spare Bill part of the afternoon." But Gilchrist, looking out of the window, said it did not promise to be a very nice day, adding that he probably would not be back before four when it would be quite dark.

"Just as if it is not possible to go out after dark and enjoy it too!" Polly observed indignantly later on in the day. The cousins were clearing up after their mid-day dinner and Polly slammed the plates into the rack in a dangerous manner as she spoke, her disgust with Gilchrist having been simmering all the morning.

But Bill hardly glanced round. "I don't care," she said indifferently; "I did not want to go so very much."

"Oh, I dare say!" Polly snorted indignantly. "He ought to have taken you all the same; I don't think it is at all nice behaviour on his part. He has not brought you a present or anything, in spite of all his fuss about Wood Hall."

"I don't want presents. He is no richer than he was, and he has no time to think of it, and—and—I don't want things."

Bill's face was rosy and her tone hurt, but Polly went on volubly: "Look at Jack Dawson; besides a lovely engagement-ring (which you have not got through Theresa's nonsense) he has given Bella—"

"I tell you, Polly, I don't want presents; I won't have you say any more about it!"

"Oh, well, of course I can quite understand you don't like to have it mentioned, but I must say I don't think it is at all nice of him. You haven't cost him much, in fact nothing at all; I suppose he thought, as he could have you for the asking, he need not trouble, but it isn't very flattering. I do think he might have taken you out—might have taken us both out—after all the trouble we have had too, that lovely supper last night, and fried bacon for breakfast this morning, and all."

Bill laughed. "A truly commercial mind!" she said. "But perhaps Gilchrist will leave a tip for our invisible servant; if so, you could take that in payment for the supper."

But Polly was much annoyed with the guest, more than was just, for the man was really too busy to think of anything at present, and he certainly had not intended to slight or wound either of the cousins. Nevertheless he had wounded Polly's pride; as for Bill, no one knew what she thought, for which reason, if for no other, Polly reflected that she had done very foolishly to speak as she had done. She was herself dressing to go out now because she "felt so upset that she could not stay in." While she dressed she came to the conclusion that she had been most indiscreet, for if it were true that Gilchrist had been neglectful it was her place to pour balm on Bill's wounds, not to point out Gilchrist's misdemeanours. She had certainly been foolish, and accordingly, before going out, she went to the kitchen and apologised for what she had said.

"I didn't mean anything," she explained. "I was annoyed by that

butcher sending in his bill as he did, and I was put out and cross altogether. Of course I would not say a word against Gilchrist. You know what a lot I think of him; he's worth twenty of Jack Dawson; nobody would expect him to waste his money on silly presents."

Bill said it was "all right," and Polly went out leaving her young cousin cleaning the kitchen-hearth. And possibly it would have been all right but for what followed. Bill had not thought of receiving presents from Gilchrist, nor yet of going out with him; she did not expect either, and though she was disappointed about the mummies, she did not regard his actions as an index of his affections.

It was when she had almost finished the hearth that there came a ring at the front door. It was not much after three yet, and Polly had said she would be home at half-past so as to be ready by the time Gilchrist returned at four. Bill came to the conclusion that it must be the baker who rang, and, since the summons sounded peremptory, she went upstairs without waiting to take off the sacking apron she had put on for cleaning the hearth. She wore her oldest frock, which she had put on as soon as their visitor went out; it was short as well as old, and her disreputable shoes showed well below it. It was not wonderful that Gilchrist looked at her blankly for a moment when she opened the door to him and his friend Ferguson. Only for a moment he looked, and then Bill, withdrawing herself behind the door after the manner of maids-of-all-work, spoke: "Miss 'Ains is out," she said; "but walk in, won't yer, sir?"

Gilchrist walked in, half paused, and then went on without speaking. It was impossible to present her to Ferguson as his future wife, more

especially impossible in the light of her stupidly unrecognising look; she herself made the introduction impossible by the very perfection with which she had assumed her part. So the introduction was not made, and the two men went up to the sitting-room to examine a document Gilchrist had left there, while Bill, with a clatter of ill-shod feet, went back to the kitchen.

By-and-bye the street door was closed, and soon after, the work being done, Bill went up-stairs to change her dress. She thought Gilchrist had gone out without his friend, but she was mistaken. As she passed the half open door of the sitting-room she saw him standing before the fireplace, where, for economy's sake, the fire had been allowed to go out after he had left that morning. Bill paused; Polly had told her to re-light the fire before half-past three. It must be done; moreover, she in her own character never hesitated about going through with any difficulty into which she might have blundered; in the character of Theresa it was impossible to know how to act, for Theresa never got into these difficulties. Consequently the character of Theresa was forgotten, and it was the original Bill who walked into the room with genuine regret for what had occurred, but not entirely without a little amusement too.

"I'll light the fire," she said, turning back the hearth-rug before she knelt down and beginning to arrange paper in the grate. "I am very sorry, Gilchrist," she went on penitently as she glanced up at the young man's gloomy face. "I never expected you back so early; I thought it was the baker."

"Are you in the habit of going to the baker like that?"

"Oh, yes, sometimes, if I am in a

hurry or he is. I thought the ring sounded like a hurry. I really am sorry, but Mr. Ferguson didn't know me, so there's not much harm done."

"I think there is a great deal of harm done." Gilchrist's face did not relax. "Don't trouble about the fire just now, I want to talk to you. Tell me, is it necessary for you to get in this condition?"

Bill obediently left laying the fire and answered apologetically: "I am afraid I am a dirty worker."

"But surely it is hardly necessary to do this work. What have you been doing? What do you do?"

"I was cleaning the kitchen-stove when you rang," Bill answered meekly, though something in the masterfulness of his tone was rousing the old Bill whom it was not easy to drive. "Perhaps," she went on with a spark of fun in her eyes, "it was hardly necessary to do the stove, but I don't know; it is a point open to discussion; the same with the knives which I have cleaned since; but your boots, which I did earlier in the day, really were necessary, don't you think so?"

"Did you clean my boots?"

"I cleaned your honour's noble boots," and she swept him a courtesy and then looked up with a dawning smile.

But he did not smile. "You ought not to have done it," he said.

"Why? I did not mind."

"I mind."

Yet his tone somehow told her that he minded because she was his future wife and the possible mistress of Wood Hall, rather than because she was herself.

"I told you I should be a general servant," she said. "Do you remember that night we went to the Dawsons and Miss Dawson was so contemptuous?" and she set her mobile face into Miss Dawson's supercilious stare.

But Gilchrist did not seem pleased by the recollection, and the imp in Bill getting the upper hand, she went on somewhat recklessly. "Well, I am a general servant now, though not a very good one. What a queer little slavey you've got here, Harborough," and her change of tone made the man start and for a moment almost think Ferguson was back. "Who the devil is she? I believe I know her face—by Jove, she's like the plum girl I met near your place last summer. But I don't think Gilchrist told her name."

"No"—his tone was cold with suppressed anger—"I did not tell your name; I was not exactly proud of my future wife."

The smile died out of her face. "I am very sorry," she said penitently, and the penitence was genuine, but Gilchrist was not mollified.

"You do not show it," he said; "mimicking my friends and making fun of what you have done hardly suggests regret. I think in the circumstances it were as well if we said no more about it. Perhaps you had better go and change your dress; talking will not make matters any better."

She began to move towards the door humbled by his words, but half turned before she opened it. "Are matters very bad?" she asked wistfully.

"Can you think them very good? Do you think your life, or ways, or,—or anything at all fitting to the position you may have to occupy? I don't mean to blame you, but things do not promise to be quite the same as they were, and I wish you would try to remember the difference."

She turned fully now, and unconsciously both tone and manner had changed, becoming quiet and firm. "You mean," she said, "that what was fitting for your wife when you were only Harborough of Crows'

Farm is not fitting now? You are quite right; I agree with you."

"Then I wish you would act upon it."

"I cannot, the unfitness goes too deep, for it is I myself who was fit to be your wife then but am not now."

"Bill! What nonsense is this? I am no different from what I was: the case is not decided, may never be decided in my favour; and if it were it would make no difference. I have never suggested such a thing, and I never meant it."

"You did not say it, but I do; it is true. Listen a minute—I have tried to be ladylike, as I thought you would wish me to be, and sometimes I think I succeed a little,—this afternoon doesn't count, it was an accident—but my ladylikeness, even if it were more successful, is not what is wanted. It is I, my real self, who am unfit to be your wife in the present circumstances."

"I don't know what right you have to say such a thing; I suppose you are angry because of what I said about this afternoon." If she were angry the young man could not help thinking she had a strange way of showing it, for her whole manner suggested clear-sighted calmness; the excitement was his. "I own I spoke sharply," he went on, "and I am sorry for it, but I was annoyed."

"You had a right to be," she told him; "I deserved it and I am not angry at all. It is not what you said just now that makes me say this, it is the whole thing; I cannot help seeing I am not fit for you now."

"Yes, you are; the position has not altered, and if it did you are as fit for the new as the old if you choose to be."

But the girl shook her head. "No," she said, "I am not. I was fit for Crows' Farm; that life would

have drawn out a good side of me, just as it drew out a side of you which wanted me. Wood Hall acts differently. Oh, I know you have not got it yet, may never have it; but the fact that you have claimed it, that you have a close acknowledged connection with the other Harboroughs has altered your position, has altered you and your ideas. No matter what happens now, you cannot be only the working farmer of Crows' Farm who wants a working wife."

"You mean to say you believe I don't think you good enough?"

"No, oh no; it is not that exactly; I think it is that we don't fit now."

"Do you want to fit?" Gilchrist eyed her sternly as he asked the question.

"I did want to," she told him. "I tried hard to be what you would like while I thought you wanted to marry me—"

"You think I don't want to marry you now?"

"Yes," she answered simply, and her school companions Carrie and Alice would have told her that she had not yet acquired a sense of decency, for she certainly did not know how to mince matters. "You did want to marry me," she said, "and I would have married you; but the new position makes you and your wants different and would make me different too. The whole thing had better end."

"In plain terms, you won't marry me now?"

"Yes, I will," she said meeting his eyes bravely. "I will marry you if you can truthfully say you still wish it."

He hesitated a moment. "Of course I do," he answered.

But that was not what Bill meant and she said so.

"You don't believe me?" he said

rather stiffly. "You must please yourself about that, but if you wish to be free of course you can be; our engagement was on those terms; you are not bound."

"I am bound by my own word," she answered; "so long as you want me I am bound. But you don't really want me. Look at me; am I suited to be your wife? Tell me—you know me now—do you wish it?"

She stood at the end of the room, the murky light of the winter dusk falling upon her, intensifying not concealing the faults in her dress, her shoes, her sacking apron. A small, odd, shabby figure she looked in that cheerless little parlour with its empty grate, small and odd, not alluring at all in the gloom. The man saw each detail, and seeing, wondered how she had ever bewitched him.

He could not but look at her, and as he looked he moved slightly. "You are talking nonsense," he said, turning to the empty grate; "to-morrow you will think better of all this."

He glanced at her as he ceased speaking, but it was too late. He should have met her eyes before if he wished to convince her.

"Thank you," she said simply; "now you have told me."

"I—told you?"

"Yes; you need not mind, you did it quite honourably. Don't mind. See here, I will square it with Polly and Theresa; it will be better so; they will only think I have changed my mind. Theresa will be sorry and Polly angry, but they won't say anything to you; they won't know about you; they will think it is all me."

"Do you mean to tell me you consider our engagement at an end and you will tell your cousins so?"

"Yes."

"You shall do no such thing!"

"I shall tell Polly to-day; she is not in yet, but she will be soon. I shall tell her as soon as she comes."

"Then you do it against my will."

"Yes," — Bill spoke doubtfully — "telling is against the grain I dare say, but the breaking off is not. It is no good, Theo; don't let us pretend any more. I know you would have honourably gone through with it because you gave your word, and I would have honourably done the same because I gave mine and believed you wished it; and we should have both done what we could to make the best of it afterwards. But all through me getting so grubby this afternoon I have found out the truth, and you are freed from your word,

and it is all over; so let us say so, and be friends."

Five minutes later Polly found the street door ajar and entered the house mentally abusing Bill's carelessness. She went up-stairs and seeing the sitting-room door open, she looked into the room. Neither fire nor gas was lighted; in the cold twilight she saw the small figure by the window.

"Bill," she exclaimed, "not dressed yet! And the fire not laid, nothing done and Gilchrist will be here directly. This is nice!"

"Gilchrist is not coming; he has gone away altogether."

"Not coming! Not coming back, do you mean? And I have bought two lovely tea-cakes and half-a-pound of fresh butter!"

(To be continued.)

DR. JOHNSON AMONG THE POETS.

"THIS way, sir, I think—"

"Sir, you are officious. Sir, a man may be trusted to discover the locality of his birth, without a terrier to smell it out for him,—least of all a Scotch one."

The voices were strange to me, but the words and manner of the rejoinder stirred a dormant memory. I turned myself about in the crowd to catch a glimpse of the speaker. As I did so, I heard again the tones of his companion.

"Very true, sir ; no offence, I beg. But do you not find it gratifying that this crowd of worthy citizens is assembled in your honour?"

In your honour! Could I believe my ears? For the place was Lichfield and the time a July morning of this present year. The big man and the little man at my elbow,—how curiously familiar were their features! Their dress, also,—that shabby brown coat with its metal buttons—but the wearer of the coat was speaking again, and my speculations were interrupted.

"Sir," said he, "I was never one that would give a farthing for the favour of the mob. The mob is brutish and its judgment is contemptible. Your question is a paltry one."

Again that sledge-hammer style! I waited instinctively for a deprecating rejoinder from the little man, and sure enough it came.

"Well sir," said he, "I hope you will at least approve the action of the good alderman of this city, who has presented the nation with the house where you were born, in order that it

may be associated with your memory for ever."

There was no more room for doubt! The railway-train that had brought a learned Society from London, the tall-hattedness (so to say) of the Society's learned members,—in short, the twentieth century had vanished, and here was I, all other faculties except attention suspended, listening to the utterances of Lichfield's greatest son.

The big man frowned and rolled his majestic body to and fro, before he answered.

"Sir," said he at last, "the alderman is vastly obliging. I do not deny that his munificence affords me a posthumous satisfaction. The ancients would have discerned in this gift an instance of poetic justice. Ah, sir, they give me the shelter of a roof now in perpetuity, who many a time had none other than the sky! But let us not talk of those days."

"No, indeed, sir," said the little man. "Why should we? Pray sir, do you not consider this a very pious age? We have seen the dwellings of Wordsworth, Carlyle, and Cowper rescued from profanation and decay, and now here is your own similarly treated."

"Sir," said Johnson — for why should I longer withhold his name?—

"Sir, I hope it may be. At the same time, I would point out to you that to build the sepulchres of the prophets has not always been considered a mark of genuine piety. Nevertheless, it behoves us, in this imperfect state of being, not to inquire too curiously into the springs of human conduct."

"Very true," said Boswell—for I was certain it was he—"and you are at least in excellent company."

Again Johnson frowned upon his companion. "Pray, sir," said he with some acerbity, "to whom do you refer?"

"Why, sir," Boswell answered, "to Wordsworth and Carlyle, and—"

"Sir," interrupted Johnson in tones of thunder, "I would have you know that it has ever been my practice to frequent excellent company, as you call it. Sir, if I have been in inferior company,—and I may have been—that company has thrust itself upon me."

"But surely, sir," said Boswell, "Wordsworth, Cowper—"

Again Johnson interrupted. "Sir, I was not alluding to those gentlemen; but I am glad that their habitations should be set apart, if it gives them any pleasure. And I make no doubt it does. For though, as the learned Grecian said, the whole earth is the tomb of famous men, yet there is something appropriate in dedicating to posterity that peculiar corner of it where each passed his days. Specially is this so in the case of Wordsworth, who cherished an unwonted affection for his own fireside. Indeed, what I find hardest to forgive in Wordsworth is that he was not a clubbable man. He repented of the Whig professions of his youth, but this fault he never amended."

"Pray sir," Boswell inquired, "what is your opinion of his poetry?"

"Sir," replied the other, "I have none. Sir, his poetical principles were mischievous and revolutionary, and therefore I decline to recognise his poetry. Indeed, I question if it be poetry at all. I am no friend to long poems in blank verse, such as I understand Mr. Wordsworth writ. Why could not the rascal rhyme?

He should have taken Pope's *MORAL ESSAYS* for his pattern."

"Or *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES*," Boswell interjected.

"Nay, sir," said Johnson, "that theme had over-much disheartened him. Poets carry enough discouragement of their own about with them without borrowing elsewhere. We have seen that in Cowper's case."

"But," said Boswell, "was not Cowper out of his mind?"

"I do not know," said Johnson. "The world is ever ready to say that of poets. There was Kit Smart, now, my old acquaintance. People said he was mad, because he did not love clean linen, but I, sir, as you know, have no passion for it. As for Cowper, he was a good man, an inoffensive man, and I am glad that his countrymen appreciate him."

"And as a writer, sir," said Boswell, "what think you of him as a writer?"

"Sir," answered Johnson, "Cowper had a pretty wit and a ready knack of expression. Sir, Cowper is tolerable when he rhymes. His topics are sometimes insignificant and his language is occasionally grovelling, but there is in his writings a substratum of good sense, wit, and piety."

"His piety preyed upon his mind, so I have heard," Boswell remarked.

"Sir," said the Sage, "if it did, it was a false and a misguided piety. Religion was intended to console a man, not to afflict him. And such I take to be the opinion of Carlyle, who is like yourself a Scotchman; so far, that is, as I have been able to understand him."

Boswell walked straight into the trap. "Does he not express himself with clearness?" he asked.

"Sir," replied Johnson, "I am not aware that perspicuity is a characteristic of your nation. Sir, his parentheses infold one another like those Indian boxes we have seen. You

open one box and you find another within it; you open that and you find another, and so on until you arrive at emptiness."

Boswell inquired, with humility, whether there was not a meaning wrapped up in these parentheses?

"I do not say there is none," said Johnson, "but the meaning is, in my judgment, obscured. Sir, a writer has no business to be obscure. It is his business to say what he has to say with lucidity, or else to hold his tongue."

Boswell took up the cudgels for his country. "This Carlyle," said he, "is, as I have heard, a great admirer of silence."

"Ay, sir," said Johnson, "so he pretends, but I notice some score of volumes to his credit. But," continued he, in high good humour, "if he be a lover of silence, so am not I. It is by speech that we learn from one another. It is discourse that raises us above the level of the brutes. He who is negligent of social intercourse is in the way to qualify himself for the company of the misanthropic Athenian. And now, with your good pleasure, we will mingle with the human tide which is flowing in the direction of my earliest, and latest, home."

Boswell acquiesced. "And later," he said, "we will resume our journey, I suppose, in the chaise and pair. You have said, you remember, that there is no more delightful method of progression."

"Sir," said Johnson, "you have misquoted me. I said that nothing is more exhilarating than to travel in a chaise and pair with a pretty woman beside one."

"Well, sir," said Boswell, in a somewhat aggrieved tone, "I am not a pretty woman, but I cannot help it."

A wonderful look of affection

flashed across Johnson's rugged features. "Sir," said he, "both those observations are just; but you are a most faithful fellow upon whose arm I now propose to lean. Shall we go?"

Pride and gratification were written on every line of Boswell's face as he offered his arm to his illustrious friend. My gaze followed them wistfully as they mingled with the throng of wayfarers. I was beginning to wonder how it was that the pair attracted no attention except mine, when I was startled by a voice at my elbow.

"When you've quite done staring at Johnson's statue," said the voice, "we may as well go into Johnson's house, or we shall miss the opening ceremony."

So it was but a day-dream after all, and now the spell was broken. I am afraid I did scant justice to the excellent speeches that were made, and the papers that were read that day, so haunted was I with the visible presence of the great man and the great biographer, and with that fragment of their talk that I seemed to have overheard.

What would one not give for Johnson's criticisms on the great poets of the revolutionary and the Victorian eras! Interesting they could not fail to be, though we should probably disagree with them. The views of the eighteenth century on poetry and criticism are not ours, and Johnson is the spokesman of the eighteenth century. A new era was at hand before death came to him; already the sap was stirring, already Coleridge and Wordsworth were born. But he does not seem to have foreseen it, nor would he have welcomed it if he had. He viewed with suspicion the romantic element in the poetry of Thomson and of Gray. He held that a poem, to be really great, should have the classic

regularity of a Greek temple. Sense must prevail over imagination. The thoughts must be reasoned, the style precise, the diction uniform. There must be no deviation from the avowed purpose of a poem. He was capable of saying, in perfect good faith, that Shakespeare seemed to write without moral purpose. In an excellent comparison he has likened Shakespeare to the forest and Pope to the garden. If he was true to his principles, he preferred the garden. Of course not even his classical prejudices could blind him to the merits of Shakespeare. Indeed, much of his Shakespearian criticism is in advance of his time. He defended the poet against "the brilliant Frenchman," but then, *Voltaire was a Frenchman*. "Addison," he said, "speaks the language of poets, and Shakespeare of men." He protested against a too servile respect for the unities; he justified the inclusion of comic scenes in tragedy. Yet full of good sense and good criticism as his commentary on Shakespeare is, he showed little genuine sympathy with the greatest of romantic poets.

No doubt this is partially to be explained by his preference of the epic to tragedy. It is unfortunate that the great epic poet of England was one whose political tenets he abhorred. Macaulay said of Johnson's criticisms that "at the very worst they mean something." It is hard perhaps to detect a meaning in his criticism on *Græciæ* as personal antipathy; but for his onslaught on *LYCIDAS* there is a possible explanation however far the "something" it may mean be removed from the true purpose of criticism. There is a passage in it which reflects upon the clergy of the Established Church, and this must have set Johnson against the entire poem. Nor can he be said to have made full atonement by his some-

what patronising commendation of *L'ALLEGRO* and *IL PENSEROSO*.

Very different is his treatment of *PARADISE LOST*. Here he had no quarrel with the subject of the poem, and could examine it with a free mind. True, he finds certain faults in the conduct of the narrative, but this arises from his conception of the critic's function. "The defects and faults of *PARADISE LOST*," he wrote, "it is the business of impartial criticism to discover." But for the epic as a whole he has the highest possible praise. "Sublimity," to quote his words, "is the general and prevailing quality of this poem;" and of Milton he said "His natural port is gigantic loftiness." Nor does he quarrel with the form of *PARADISE LOST* for running counter to one of his favourite principles, that of all metres the heroic couplet is the most admirable. Descended through Waller and Denham, a power in the hand of Dryden, perfected by Pope, in Johnson's opinion it had no rival. "Poetry," says he, "may subsist without rhyme, but English poetry will not often please. . . . Blank verse . . . has neither the easiness of prose nor the melody of numbers, and therefore tires by long continuance. Of the Italian writers without rhyme, whom Milton alleges as precedents, not one is popular." Such was the strength of his prejudice; mark now the sublimity of his surrender: "But whatever be the advantage of rhyme, I cannot prevail on myself to wish that Milton had been a rhymers, for I cannot wish his work to be other than it is."

Johnson was already an old man when he undertook to write the lives of the English Poets. The task was not so vast as at first appears, for the earliest poet with whom he had to deal was Cowley, and the drama did not come within his scope. The range to be covered was little more

than a century. For such a task he was peculiarly fitted, for he probably knew more about the poets and poetry of that age than any other man then living. Much of his knowledge was first-hand, while during his long life as a man of letters he had gathered no small store of tradition on matters literary and poetical. He seems to have taken real pleasure in this undertaking, and was repaid by its unqualified success. *THE LIVES OF THE POETS* won for Johnson many admirers and some assailants. To-day it is the most popular of all his works. The *DICTIONARY* is an undying monument to its author, but one cannot sit down to read a dictionary. In Johnson's own lifetime *THE RAMBLER* had a great vogue, but it is to be feared that the "weighty and magnificent eloquence," the "solemn yet pleasing humour" which Macaulay has commemorated would escape the notice of most modern readers. In the domain of the essay Addison held the field, as Johnson recognised. "He who would make himself master of the English language," said he, "must devote his days and his nights to the study of Addison;" and elsewhere he has called Addison "the Raphael of essay writers." He sought, in *THE RAMBLER*, to tread in the footsteps of *THE SPECTATOR*; but as Lady Mary Montagu wittily said, Johnson's papers followed Addison's much as "a pack-horse would follow a hunter." This verdict comes, it must be owned, nearer the truth than that of an early editor of *THE RAMBLER*, who maintained "that Johnson united more than the vigour of Dryden with more than the polish of Addison." Posterity sides with Lady Mary, and Johnson would himself have scouted his editor's opinion. He seems to have been conscious of his own heavier paces: "When I say a good thing," he owned, "I seem to labour." Like

a certain expletive, according to Bob Acres, *THE RAMBLER* has had its day; and *THE ADVENTURER* and *THE IDLER* have followed it into limbo.

The truth is that an essay, like an omelette, requires a very light hand. It is when Johnson touches fact that his excellence appears. He said, and finely, of Milton, "Reality was a scene too narrow for his mind"; but in that scene his own genius most loved to expatiate. Few narratives are more enthralling than his account of the unhappy Savage. Sir Joshua told Boswell that the book, though he knew nothing of its author, seized his attention so strongly that he could not lay it down till he had finished it. The fascination of *THE LIFE OF SAVAGE* is as strong as ever. The theme was congenial to Johnson, and he was completely master of it, for he had shared the penury and enjoyed the confidence of Savage. It is the earliest of *THE LIVES OF THE POETS*, and it is the best. Indeed, the fortunes of poets had a special charm for Johnson, and in tracing their vicissitudes his prose reaches its high-water mark.

But how far is he among the poets in the sense that he is a poet himself? The bulk of his verse is not great, and we know that he gave to its composition a very small portion of his time and energy. His *DICTIONARY*, his *LIVES OF THE POETS*, and, above all, his conversation, have overshadowed it. Nor, indeed, has Johnson's poetry that "right Promethean fire" which burns and glows in the genius of Shelley, of Byron, of all such as are poets born. In Johnson the poetic impulse was occasional, and not insistent. When Boswell asked him if he would not give the world some more of Juvenal's satires, he replied that he would probably do so, for he had them all in his head. There, however, he allowed them to remain.

"I am not obliged to do any more," he said. "No man is obliged to do as much as he can do. A man is to have part of his life to himself." "But I wonder, sir," said Boswell, "you have not more pleasure in writing than in not writing." "Sir," said Johnson, "you *may* wonder."

Melpomene did not brood over his cradle. Reflection, observation of mankind, personal experience,—of these, rather than of imagination, the stuff of his verse is woven. Yet verse has never been refused the title of poetry because it is didactic; the treatment is the thing; and the candid reader of Johnson's satires must admit that the vigour and the occasional splendour of their diction exalts them far above what is merely verse.

As in his prose, so in his poetry; it is where Johnson touches fact that he is excellent. His tragedy, *IRENE*, which not all Garrick's efforts could save from failure, is only by accident in poetic form. Irene herself is, indeed, a female Rambler. His occasional pieces are, with a few happy exceptions, nothing more than those excursions in rhyme which are the almost inevitable interludes in the real work of any man of letters. The Ode to Friendship appeared to Boswell "exquisitely beautiful"; to us the lines are cold and stilted. There is a series of poems addressed to Stella, which are equally conventional; they stir our hearts as little as they stirred, one supposes, their writer's. Stella appears to have been a Miss Hickman, who married in 1734. Johnson himself married two years later, and the poems appeared subsequent to that event. It is known that he never wavered in his devotion to his wife, so we may infer that the heroics to Stella are perfunctory. They wholly lack the sincerity of his lines to Mrs. Thrale, to whom he was genuinely attached.

And all who wisely wish to wive
Must look on Thrale at thirty-five.

The compliment is sincere, if not exactly elegant. Equally sincere is the tribute with which he honoured the memory of Robert Levet, one of those humble friends who found a home beneath his charitable roof.

Well tried through many a varying
year,
See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

When fainting Nature call'd for aid,
And hov'ring death prepared the
blow,
His vigorous remedy display'd
The power of art without the show.

In misery's darkest caverns known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless anguish pour'd his
groan,
And lonely want retir'd to die.

His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure th' Eternal Master found
The single talent well employ'd.

These are lines that require no commendation. The epitaph on the poor travelling fiddler, Claude Phillips, deserves a place beside them. One day, when Johnson and Garrick were sitting together, the latter repeated an epitaph which a Dr. Wilkes had composed upon Phillips. Johnson was dissatisfied with the "commonplace funeral lines," as Boswell justly calls them, and said to Garrick, "I think, Davy, I can make a better." "Then," the biographer adds, "stirring about his tea for a little while, in a state of meditation he almost extempore produced the following verses:

'Phillips, whose touch harmonious
could remove
The pangs of guilty power and hapless
love,
Rest here, distress'd by poverty no
more,

Find here that calm thou gav'st so oft
before;
Sleep undisturb'd within this peaceful
shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like
thine.' "

Any musician might covet such an epitaph; any poet might be proud to have written it.

But it is in his longer poems that Johnson's personality naturally finds its fullest expression. It is to the two great satires that we must look for the moralist, the patriot, the foe of oppression. There may be read, between the lines, his dogged persistence, his integrity, his reverence, as well as the kindness and pity that underlay his rough exterior. It was his LONDON, as Boswell says, which, morally as well as intellectually, first "gave the world assurance of the man." Eleven years later the publication of *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES* confirmed that assurance.

We cannot read LONDON with the eyes of its author's contemporaries. Its political complexion has lost all its colour for us; we cannot feel either Johnson's Tory fervour, or the Whig antipathy which it no doubt evoked. But if party politics had alone made the poem's reputation, it would have been long since as dead as its author. There beats through it a man's heart, not passionately, rebelliously, least of all querulously, but solemnly, mournfully, with infinite pity for the suffering he knew, yet with a manly endurance of his share in it. It shows us the feelings of one who had come to the capital in search of fortune, and as yet had searched in vain. London, in those early years, was a hard step-mother to Johnson, and it must be owned that he shows in this satire no trace of his subsequent devotion. The city is "the needy villain's general home," a place where "surly

Virtue" cannot "hope to fix a friend." But it must not be forgotten that during the long years of struggle Johnson endured very real privations, and rebuffs that were even harder to bear.

Of all the griefs that harass the
distress'd,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest.

These words bear the stamp of genuine indignation; and it was no assumed bitterness that caused him to print in capital letters the second line of the best known couplet:

This mournful truth is everywhere
confess'd:
SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POV-
ERTY DEPRESS'D.

Yet, fine as LONDON is, Garrick was unquestionably wrong when he ranked it above *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES*. The second satire excels the first in weight, in philosophic dignity, and in the splendour of its illustrations; it is also less political, and therefore more interesting. Both Scott and Byron have left on record their admiration for it. Scott told James Ballantyne that he derived more pleasure from reading LONDON and *THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES* than any other poetical composition he could mention; and, adds Ballantyne, "I think I never saw his countenance more indicative of high admiration than while reciting aloud from these productions." Byron thought "the examples and modes of giving them sublime," and the whole poem, "with the exception of an occasional couplet," grand, "and so true—true as the 10th of Juvenal himself." Macaulay confessed to a difficulty in deciding which had done best, the ancient or the modern poet. The fall of Wolsey he put below the fall of Sejanus, and considered that in

the concluding passage "the Christian moralist has fallen decidedly short of the sublimity of his Pagan model." But, "Juvenal's Hannibal must yield to Johnson's Charles; and Johnson's vigorous and pathetic enumeration of the miseries of a literary life must be allowed to be superior to Juvenal's lamentation over the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero." The miseries of a literary life were a favourite theme with Johnson.

There mark what ills the scholar's life
assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the
gaol.
See nations, slowly wise and meanly
just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.

But would Johnson himself have been the happier if he had fled from these evils to preside over that little school in Shropshire, the mastership of which he desired to obtain, in order, says Boswell, to have a sure though moderate income for his life? What a mercy that Earl Gower's "respectable application" to Dean Swift, to obtain for Johnson the required degree from Dublin, proved a failure! Far from his beloved city Johnson's genius would have languished. Immersed in uncongenial labour he would assuredly have felt the vanity of human wishes, but would have lacked the spirit to ex-

press it. That famous picture of the warrior's pride and of the fate that overtook it might never have been painted. We should have lost the tremendous peroration on Charles of Sweden.

But did not chance at length her error
mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his
end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal
wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the
ground?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world
grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

Nil ergo optabunt homines? Shall we mortals wish for nothing? That is not Johnson's conclusion, any more than it is Juvenal's. Ask, says Juvenal, for a sound mind in a sound body, for a spirit at once brave and resigned. And Johnson bids us hope for these blessings, and for love and faith as well.

These goods for man the laws of
Heav'n ordain,
These goods He grants, who grants the
pow'r to gain;
With these celestial wisdom calms the
mind,
And makes the happiness she does not
find.

H. C. MINCHIN

THE ART OF FRIENDSHIP.

"THERE were giants in those days," is the Pessimist's favourite quotation, for invariably he sees giants in the days behind us, and pigmies in the days before. In the past there were picturesque romance, the clash of swords, the flash of shields, the glory of resplendent doublets; in the present there are dust and grime and pettiness and monotony, the dull sable sameness of civilised life. In the past there were Raphael and Correggio; in the present there is the cinematograph. In the past there were the harpsichord and the viol, and the lute of the troubadour; in the present there is the patent paper-wound automaton which groans out our music for us. In the past there were Homer and Virgil and Petrarch; in the present there is the omniscient encyclopædia-laden journalist. In the past there was the love of Isaac for the daughter of Bethuel, the love of Angelo for Vittoria, the love of Dante for Beatrice; in the present there are the convenient marriages of princes and princesses, ill-imitated by the proletariat, who seek not a bride but the capital for a small shop, not a woman to love and to be loved, but a sordid partner in a domestic establishment where liability is unlimited. In the past there was the friendship of David and Jonathan, of Orestes and Pylades, of Pliny and Tacitus, of Anthony and Cæsar, of Locke and Molineux, of Swift and Pope; in the present there is the large circle of acquaintances, as the funeral paragraph invariably describes it.

It can probably be said for the Pessimist that, often as he is wrong,

in respect to friendship he is nearest to the truth. There is reason for a suspicion, if not more than a suspicion, that the art of friendship is dead amongst us. The friendship of the ancients, both of Greece and of Rome, was very exacting. In modern times we should look a long day for such mutual regard as that of Damon and Pythias, which softened the heart of Dionysius himself. Friendship, in our crowded days, covers a wider area, but as in the case of all extensive developments it has lost intensively. It has become, as Swift described it, "the friendship of the middling kind." But rarely do we see the stubborn, stoical, mutual regard which Cicero describes, self-annihilatory, seeking for excellence, priceless-rich in trust and confidence. Much of our friendship is wrecked, as Lysander says of love in *THE MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, by running "upon the choice of friends." Polonius bade Laertes to be deliberate, that is, to choose cautiously ere he grappled his friends to his soul "with hoops of steel." Herein we have the normal advice on the subject, distorted usually to such an extent that the kindly chamberlain would repudiate responsibility for our interpretation. Since our school-days it has been dinned into our ears. We were whipped for swapping peg-tops with the boy from the house beyond the hill, not that the bargain was a bad one, nor that our regard for him lacked sincerity, but that someone else regarded him as an undesirable companion. It may be that his father once sold pork, by the pound and not by the pig; it may

be that his mother on one occasion herself wiped the dust from her own window. Whatever might be the ostensible reason we were compelled to return the peg-top, which we did with an ill grace, for bitter is the first lesson in conventional friendship. It was an initiation into the lesson, the valuable lesson, that for the future our friends must not shake hands over the social barriers. Many hands have been torn by the broken bottles on the walls of social difference.

The emphasis of the element of choice in friendship, with its concomitant, the 'banishment of the element of spontaneous affection, has done much to render true friendship impossible and to bring about the present decay of the art. It is unfortunate in a utilitarian day that we cannot likewise choose our parents. Friendship is fallen from its ideal. The friendship described by Bishop Hall nearly two hundred years ago as "diffusing its odour through the season of absence" is exchanged for the slenderest of acquaintanceships whose value is duly marked by our indifferent nods of greeting. So ready are we to say that John Smith and William Brown are unsuitable friends, because we cannot see the tie which binds them, that the simple quality of affection is left out of the reckoning altogether. Were we to choose a friend for John Smith, there is Thomas Robinson who could assist him in business, or Joseph Jones who would be that priceless of friends, in the modern computation, the friend at court. We forget the primary necessity that John Smith must love his friend; we overlook the fact that as yet science has not discovered a process of vaccination whereby affection may be transplanted or infused. John Smith may choose a valet or a private secretary, and if by the same process he chooses a friend, that friend

will be, in greater or less degree, an *employé*. Hence it is that the wide preaching of the doctrine of choice has ousted friendship from the category of tender relationships. In its stead we have visiting-lists. Not those whom we love, but those whom we would propitiate do we invite to dinner. Those who would propitiate us invite us in turn, and permit us to eat their food, air our views, and even, by incredible patience, to sing our songs, not for their but for our own satisfaction. We have banished from our lives the tender confidence and the sweet counsel, of which Cicero spoke: "Where would be the great enjoyment in prosperity, if you had not one to rejoice in it equally with yourself? And adversity would indeed be difficult to endure, without some one to bear it even with greater regret than yourself." So far has the axiom of splendid isolation infected not merely national but personal affairs that the Stoic who does not even confide in his wife is rapidly coming to be regarded as the hero instead of as the Turk, which really he is. The morning train finds us ready to cast our pearls of wisdom before—fellow-travellers, who see us morning by morning and scarcely know our names and could not spell them if they did. A solicitor gives us advice on law, a stockbroker on finance, a medicine-man on ailments, each for a convenient fee, until we have disseminated the whole of friendship into several professional acts. The morning, midday, and evening newspapers bring to us the influence of humanity, where once tender and confidential personal intercourse would mould our lives into a true image with a clear superscription of loftier ideals. So far have we gone in our scorn for intimate, day-by-day, personal contact, that we roundly declare we have no leisure for it, just as the American

speculator impetuously, but not untruthfully, groaned that he had not the "durned time to live." Accordingly when we hear of Carlyle and Tennyson smoking together in silence for hours, we smile our lack of comprehension, since the unattainable is always a laughing matter. Thus do dogs bay at the moon.

It was said by a fluent orator, and fluent orators are usually very dangerous guides, that the post-card, the telegraph, and the telephone make every man every man's friend. He even quoted Puck who declared that he would "put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," from which he deduced that two-thirds of an hour would accomplish universal friendship. But these three implements have done much to destroy intimate friendly intercourse. Obviously the post-card, while it saves a halfpenny, closes one's soul lest the expression of finer emotions should give occasion for ribaldry to those who regard post-cards as quasi-public documents. The telephone enables us to hold men safely at a distance while we converse hurriedly with them. The telegraph flashes a purchase, sometimes accurately, but even the novelist has not yet arisen to make it flash a proposal or an expression of regard. The triumph of electricity has achieved less than a warm grasp of the hand, for its triumph is to cut out the sweet superfluous words, and superfluous words are worth more than a halfpenny each. The cynic who asked a pair of lovers what subjects they found for eternal discussion was meetly answered when the maiden said, "Only one, sir—everything." Of course the cynic did not understand. He would be able to estimate the influence of Saturn on the ripening of pomegranates, but a discussion on the one subject which wakes life

into radiancy was to him,—superfluous words. Amid all the waste of to-day we waste no words. We ask for crisp paragraphs in our newspapers, spicy paragraphs for jaded palates. We wish to buy and sell, to ask for food, and to express our contentment or otherwise, but rarely do we wish to declare our simple regard for a fellow unit of humanity. Ask him to dinner, lament to him the weakness of the Government, but keep him safely without the veil which hides our little Holy of Holies. We live, alas, in the suburbs of each other's hearts.

Hence we establish clubs and societies; clubs, where we eat in accord; societies, where we speak in accord. These represent our modern individual weakness, while friendship, in which men think in accord, would represent individual strength. Could anyone imagine Daniel founding a society for opening wide the windows and praying towards the East? Daniel, says the hymn, "dared to stand alone." Now-a-days he would have been chairman of an Executive Committee with five to form a quorum, for we seek a corporate metamorphosis to hide a cowardice which we are too cowardly to admit. Every propaganda has its cult, and even eating and drinking, which are essentially personal affairs, are made into matters for mutual pledge and association. Egotism is evil, no doubt; the everlasting I of a self-assertive man is more than objectionable. Yet there is this to be said of him; if he is criticised he himself receives the thrust, whereas in clubs and societies it is always possible to put the blame on the committee. Judging by present tendencies, many men expect the Judgment Day to divide, not the goats from the sheep, but the committees from the members, for only societies do wrong.

This associationist tendency is symptomatic of the decay of true friendship. "Man is not good if alone," is a convenient distortion of a Biblical text which referred particularly to the married state. Men fly to societies, clubs, institutions, and associations to find a companionship which friendship, if there were such, would readily furnish, and upon a sounder basis than the blackballing of undesirables. Birds of a feather should not need the guardianship of a committee and an exclusive subscription to enable them to flock together without danger.

It may be said that the decay of the art of friendship is characteristic of the male genus only; that women are still as ready for affectionate friendship with their own kind as ever they were. It is true that women have less temptations from the narrow path of friendship. Afternoon tea allures less subtly than the morning train, and the effects of the postcard are outweighed by the necessities of the postscript. The telegraph and the telephone, for obvious reasons, do not interrupt women's friendships as they do men's, for unhappily these devices can only be used intermittently and briefly; and brevity is the destroying angel of a woman's wit. But it is still true that acquaintanceship has taken the place of friendship in the woman's world, though there is a greater display of affection in the mere acquaintanceship of women than there is in the case of the less demonstrative and more demonstrable sex. It is well for women that the cynic who watches their farewell and greeting kisses is forced to admit that the historic kiss of betrayal was masculine. Women have less to gain than have men by the utilitarian choice of acquaintances. Ulterior motives may tempt an American

heiress to charter a duchess as a *chaperone*, but possibly no ulterior motive would suffice to bid her seek similarly a friend. And it is to the glory of womanhood that with women there has remained such of the old notion of friendliness as still exists in the world. It is better to be conservative of emotions than of constitutions.

Of course, there is a third and a very important class of friendship, the friendship between members of the opposite, or, as the misogynist would say, the opposed sexes. Friendship is usually said to be impossible across the curious barrier which is alleged to divide man from woman. Plato regarded such friendship as perfect, being ideal sympathy. "It now means," said Mr. G. H. Lewes, "the love of a sentimental young gentleman for a woman he cannot or will not marry." Thus what we call Platonic friendship is the merest shadow of that which Plato described. It is a curious development that we should so sneer at friendship that the most perfect friendship is tacitly regarded as impossible. Unless love be regarded as an instantaneous vision, knowing no premonitions and having no preludes, there is nothing from which love can grow but true Platonic, or perfect friendship. There must surely be some crumbs of esteem and admiration which fall for others from our table of love. At once we have the hint of jealousy. But a jealous husband is one who has not come into his kingdom, and a jealous wife is a woman who sees the charm of other women and hates those charms rather than learns their worth. And it must of necessity be disastrous that women can influence women, and no woman influence men save through the channel of matrimony. There is a deep truth in the Russian proverb that he who loves

one woman has some love for all women.

Ruskin advised every girl to have six sweethearts coincidentally. It was excellent advice. That misjudged person, the flirt, is most frequently a woman whose heart aches for friendship, but who keeps the richest store hidden for her king when he shall come. Those who were never her king, who never could be her king, call her names by way of rejoinder. They overlook the salient fact that all she gave them was friendly interest, and that was all she pretended to give them, for a conscious flirt,—that is, a woman who consciously pretends to love—is as impossible as a conscious hypocrite. In fact the flirt is the only remaining artist in friendship, and a world which knows not what friendship is makes good the deficiency by maligning her. We ask in love's forest that there be only the giant oak of love; as a matter of fact there are the many dwarfed evergreens of friendship and the undergrowth of mere mutual esteem, and these shrubs can never grow to be other than they are. It is folly, because we have not the oak, to burn to the roots the other trees and leave the brown place bare.

"Let all our intervals be employed in prayers, charity, friendliness and neighbourhood,"—thus wrote the saintly Jeremy Taylor. It is a far different sentiment from the mere choice of useful friends on the one hand, or the choice of wife or husband on the other. Copybooks may bid us choose our friends carefully; the Uncopied Book bids us

love them diligently. Mr. Gilbert's magnet sought the silver churn, and alas for its disappointment! And we so often choose and seek the responseless silver churns, when the steel would fly to us at our attraction. He who sets out to make friends is a sycophant, and Dr. Johnson knew what a sycophant was: "He that is too desirous to be loved will soon learn to flatter." He who desires to love will gain friends, if he does not set out to gain them; and they will love him, if not too apparently he seeks their love. No choice, no fitness, no power to confer gifts, no mutual interest of acquaintanceship will take the place of simple spontaneous affection. The bees of infinitely numerous affectionate impulses produce the honey of goodly counsel, and goodly counsel is the evidence of friendship. It was of love in this wider sense that William Morris, the singer of friendship and fellowship, wrote these great lines; it was to arouse a world, somnolent and self-satisfied, to the truth which a life of hurry, skimming across the superficies of things, fails to perceive in the cavernous depths.

Love is enough; though the World be
a-waning,
And the woods have no voice but the
voice of complaining,
Though the sky be too dark for
dim eyes to discover.
Yet their eyes shall not tremble, their
feet shall not falter,
The void shall not weary, the fear shall
shall not alter
These lips and these eyes of the
Loved and the Lover.

J. G. L.

WARDS OF GOD.

THE race of half-witted mendicants and privileged eccentrics, once so numerous in Ireland, is now rapidly dying out; chiefly, no doubt, because of the utilitarian spirit which, for better or for worse, has begun to transform the conditions of the Irish peasant's life. Before long the picturesque naturals, who wandered at will from house to house, welcomed, or at least tolerated, everywhere, will be as extinct as the *daoine sídhe*, the gentle fairy-folk, with whom they so frequently claimed kinship. But some few years ago things were different, and there was scarcely a parish in Ireland which did not shelter one or more of these Wards of God, as the old monkish annalist calls them.

The village which I will here style Ballycomer was particularly favoured in this respect, for no less than three of the strange beings made it their home, or place of frequent sojourn. Each of the three belonged to a distinct type of natural; and they had nought in common save the facts that they subsisted upon charity, and were more or less mentally affected.

First of the three, let us take Matt Kinerney. He was a man of about thirty years, with a face of the Spanish sort, long, oval, and olive-hued, hung about with wisps of blue-black hair. A handsome man he was in so far as the outline of his features went, with great brown eyes fixed in an everlasting stare, as though some dreadful apparition were ever before them. He was tall too, was Matt, possessing great sinewy limbs, and a

splendid breadth of shoulders; but he held himself loosely, and his long neck was ever thrust forward, till his matted black beard drooped far over his breast. In rags was he clad, strange, motley rags of many colours, sewn or pinned together, sometimes tied together with twine, or even fastened with thorns from the hedge-row-briar. A coat, or upper garment, and a pair of trousers formed his sole attire in spring, summer, and autumn. During the winter months he appeared in coarse flannel shirts, gifts of the charitable; but these were torn up on the approach of warmer weather, and used as patches to hang on "patron bushes,"¹ or else to embellish the all-important "jacket an' throwers." A hat he owned, rimless and green with age; but this was borne for the most part over his hairy breast, where, together with a red cotton handkerchief, it served to hold valuables. In winter and summer alike Matt went barefoot; and his feet, although large and sorely calloused, were invariably clean, for he made a point of washing them carefully at every stream and pond which he passed. At odd times he carried a bundle; but this was usually stolen from him by tramping tinkers, if not hurled by himself at the heads of mischievous boys. These *gorsoons*, in truth, were poor Matt's worst enemies; *kinndts*, he called them, a

¹ Bushes beside holy walls, and spots dedicated to patron saints, were (and still are in certain parts) hung about with shreds of cloth left there by those who came to pray. The custom, according to O'Curry, is older than Christianity, like the Bel-fire and the Wake.

term of opprobrium, the exact meaning of which is a mystery to me. They did him no actual harm, but followed at a safe distance, driving him frantic with taunt and jeer. This cruelty to the helpless or weak-minded is unfortunately a common trait of thoughtless urchins, and by no means peculiar to those of Ballycomer. But Matt 'Kinerney could hardly be expected to make allowances for juvenile wantonness; and so between the *gorsoons* and himself there raged a bitter feud.

Matt generally tried to slip into the village while the boys were at school; but his confused methods of reckoning time proved a bar to the success of this manœuvre, and, his presence becoming known, he was speedily surrounded. There was one subject upon which he was peculiarly sensitive, and which supplied his foes with unfailing matter for their jibes. He had a craze for purchasing leaden spoons, not for use, but solely in order that he might retire to some quiet spot and spend a happy half-hour in twisting off the heads. This occupation appeared to fill him with pleasure (perhaps he fancied himself twisting in effigy the necks of black-guard boys); and many a time have I come upon him, seated, like Ophelia,

Where a green willow grows aslant a brook,

laughing luxuriously to himself as he sundered the soft lead, and flung the heads at the skurrying minnows. It was useless to give Matt money, for he invariably spent it in buying spoons. "Morrow to ye Matt!" the boys would cry. "Will ye have a spoon to twist? . . . Lock up your spoons, widow dear; here comes Matt 'Kinerney!" Or else, obtaining a great wooden spoon, which might not be twisted, they would

shake it mockingly at the poor fellow. Then Matt, with rage in his heart, turned upon and anathematised his tormentors. "G'wan now, ye *kin-na's*!" cried he in his deep, musical voice. "G'wan now, an' larn your cadychism, or I'll set my curse on some o' ye!" But he never really cursed them after all, for he was a gentle soul, even when angry,—a very different creature from the malevolent Bett Mellon, another of our Ballycomer naturals.

When Matt had made his rounds in the village, and arranged for some sleeping place for the night (a clean hay-loft or stable suited him best, and this he had little difficulty in securing, for he was thoroughly honest and civil-spoken), his first call was upon the priest, his next upon the good people at Ballycomer House. The parish priest in those days was a character in his way, a venerable scholar educated at Louvain and Rome, who spoke Irish, English, French, and Latin with ease, but perhaps Irish best. Father Purcell (so was he called) treated Matt with a brusque kindness, made him repeat a *pater* and *ave* in the mother tongue, gave him his blessing, and bade him "go away now, and be a good boy." If any boy made mock of Matt while the Reverend Philip Purcell, S.T.P., was within earshot, the imp was apt to feel the weight of the priest's holly staff across his shoulders.

Dismissed by Father Philip, off went Matt to the big house, as he termed it. He never knocked at the front door, but took up his position on the gravel sweep before the windows, or else squatted comfortably down upon the lawn. Then in a monotonous (but still musical) chant he began his familiar appeal, which was at once a prayer for the repose of the departed, and a notifi-

cation to the survivors that Matt 'Kinerney had come to dinner. "Lord ha' mercy on the ould Masther that's gone, an' on the ould Misthress,"—in such wise ran his orisons; "an' Lord ha' mercy on Masther Terence that was kilt in the wars, an' poor Miss Sheela that married the Englishman (sure I forget his name), an' Masther Pierce (he was the best o' them all), an' Masther Maurice, an' all their sowls. An' Lord ha' mercy on the sowls of all the family, that's dead an' gone. May they rest in peace—amen!"

Here there was a pause, as Matt waited to see if his prayers had been heard (not above, of course, but by any listening members of the family). Heard he usually was, for his voice, while never unduly raised, and in no sense the whine of the ordinary beggar, had in it an extraordinarily penetrating quality. If, however, as sometimes happened, his first appeal passed unheeded, he began all over again, and continued patiently until someone appeared. A trifle of alms and a plentiful supply of food were his invariable rewards; and, if any event had occurred in the household (such as a birth, a wedding, or a death) since his last visit, Matt was duly informed of the fact by the servant who brought him his dinner. The meal dispatched (it was eaten in full view of the household, for Matt would not enter the servants' quarters,) and the remnants stowed away in his handkerchief, a second series of prayers began. These dealt with the living, rather than the dead. "God bless the Masther an' the Misthress an' the young ladies an' gentlemen," sonorously declaimed the wanderer. "An' God send Masther Geoffrey a fine wife an' a nate fortune." If Masther Geoffrey (the prospective bridegroom) happened to be at home, this meant a coin of the realm for

Matt, who received the gift as a fee duly earned, and, muttering further prayers as he went, hurried away to the village, intent upon a grand orgie in spoon-twisting.

Next morning at daybreak he was gone from Ballycomer, and brushing the dew from the upland heather many a mile away. As he sped onward with mighty strides, he crooned to himself some old Irish *Come-all-ye*, as the queer monotonous ballads of penal days are called, from the fact that they nearly always begin with those three words. Workhouse towns and cities he avoided like the plague, and he never returned to the same locality oftener than once a month. His relatives were said to be decent farmers somewhere in the Slieve Bloom mountains; and they tried unavailingly to keep Matt at home. As to his curious patronymic 'Kinerney, I believe it to be a corruption of the Irish name MacInerney. Such contractions were common in the Ballycomer district, MacGrath becoming *Crd*, and O'Faalen *Whalen*. In the winter, Matt was often overcome by exposure to the elements, and rumours periodically reached us that the Ward of God had gone to his great Guardian. But with the return of spring came Matt in his rags again, quarrelling as bitterly as ever with new generations of *gorsoons*, twisting the heads of new spoons, and praying new prayers for "the sowls of the Family."

Allusion has been made to Bett Mellon, another of our naturals. If Matt 'Kinerney had a reputation for harmlessness, not so Bett. She was a little hunched-up atomy, wrapped from head to foot in a patched shawl, with only her face showing through the folds,—and such a face! Had she dwelt in merry England in the time of Matthew Hopkins, she would assuredly have been pricked for a

witch on the evidence of her countenance alone. Nose and chin almost met, and resembled in shape, colour, and sharpness the nippers of a lobster. Her gaze was for the most part bent upon the ground; but when she did look up, it was seen that her eyes were greenish and threatening like those of a spiteful cat, and in size but little larger. She had no eyebrows whatsoever; but other parts of her face were tufted with hair, and a *glibbe*, or coarse lock of the grey which had once been red, hung over her forehead. Children feared Bett instinctively, thinking of certain pictures of witches in their story-books. She was of mixed Irish and French parentage; her father having gone from Ballycomer to fight under Count Henry Shee¹, in the army of the great Napoleon, while her mother was a Picard peasant. As to her age, we set it down as little short of a hundred. Count Shee (who died in 1820) had sent her, a well-grown child, to Ireland, not long after her father had fallen at Waterloo. She lived all alone in a little house, near the fair-green of Ballycomer, subsisting on alms and on letting lodgings to itinerant blind men. Mad she certainly was, but not dangerously so, unless roused to anger. In such cases her fury was dreadful to witness. Could she seize upon the object of her wrath, her sharp claws were certain to leave their marks upon him; her eyes would flash balefully, and she would bite and scratch in tigerish fashion. A great yellow cat shared her hut, and with this beast she was wont to fall out frequently. Then a strange sight was witnessed by the neighbours. Bett Mellon, throwing

herself upon her hands and knees, would arch her back exactly in the fashion of her familiar; and the two would spit, growl, and finally spring at each other in the true spirit of feline warfare,—fighting savagely, and rolling over and over upon the earthen floor, until some venturesome neighbour came to tear them apart.

Bett Mellon's daily occupation consisted in gathering *brestlin* (bundles of firewood); and she was constantly in trouble with the farmers because of her habit of appropriating growing timber to which she had no right. Magistrates, however, refused to issue a summons against her on account of her mental infirmity; and the farmers, to tell the truth, were afraid of her as a witch. Shortly after her husband's death (this must have been some sixty years ago) she had disappeared from Ballycomer for seven years, nor was any trace of her ever discovered. The whisper arose, and became a fixed tradition, that Bett had spent those seven years in the land of Faëry. When next seen by Ballycomer eyes, she was coming out of the old haunted earthen fortress of Rathmore, which was famous throughout Nore valley as one of the gates of the fairy-people. After her return, Bett took possession of a deserted hut. She affected extreme deafness, and for thirty years was said never to have spoken an articulate word. Yet her curse was dreaded throughout the parish. Children did not dare to tease her as they did poor Matt 'Kinerney, for she had a method of dealing with them which struck terror to their souls. Once I was witness to a specimen of her unspoken witchery. She had strayed beyond her accustomed paths, and was hobbling with a load of firewood down a lonely valley in the neighbouring parish of Castledowney, mumbling to herself as she went. Some boys, knowing her not, danced across the

¹ Count Henry Shee, like his nephew Clarke, Maréchal Duc de Feltre, was an Irishman from the Nore Valley. Count D'Alton-Shee, the well-known legitimist, was his grandson.

lane, shouting in derision. Bett motioned them away with a skinny hand; but they continued to mock her, crying out that she was the hag in the chap-book story of **TEAGUE AND THE OULD WITCH**. Instantly Bett Mellon threw down her bundle, selected from it two sticks, laid them cross-wise in the road, and stooping down breathed upon them. The children ceased their outcry, and gazed open-mouthed. Fixing them with her vindictive eyes, Bett commenced a noise resembling the growl of a cat in anger. No words could be distinguished, but the urchins knew that they were being cursed, and fled helter-skelter from the spot. For weeks their anxious mothers would not permit them to go abroad; and the death of one of them a year later was unquestioningly set down to the evil agency of Bett Mellon.

Every week Bett came to Ballycomer House to beg. She did not speak, but stood silently before the door, waiting for alms. At such times obstreperous children were hushed with the dread tidings that "Bett Mellon had come for them with her bag." She wasted no time on prayers; and, when she had received, went her way without thanks or acknowledgment. Poor wretch! Hers was a miserable lot, unlike the careless open-air life of Matt 'Kinerney, or of yet another of our naturals, the man called Count-the-Farmers.

This Count-the-Farmers was a merry rogue, a fool of such cunning, that some thought his folly merely a cloak for idleness. He wore a venerable coat, which had once been scarlet, and a velvet cap, erstwhile the property of some mighty hunter of those parts. Old-fashioned corduroy knee-breeches, and blue stockings (in a chronically ungartered state) completed his costume. A pair of top-boots he also owned; but these were

carried, save on very grand occasions, slung over his back. If memory does not err, his real name was Freyney, of the ancient Norman-Irish race of De La Freyne, but more recently related to the notorious highwayman, James Freyney. He travelled as he pleased from place to place, frequenting from choice fairs, wakes, weddings, and christenings. The sobriquet Count-the-Farmers was given to him because he knew, or was supposed to know, the name, descent, and character of every farmer, as well as of all the gentlemen of Irish blood in the southern half of the province of Leinster. This knowledge he used to his own advantage; and he had composed a long doggrel poem, to which additions and emendations were made from time to time, and in which the facts gathered in his wanderings were quaintly set forth. Wherever he had been well treated Count-the-Farmers had nought but pleasant things to record concerning his hosts; but woe betide the householder who refused him sustenance, or wounded his self-respect. The unfortunate was straightway gibbeted in Freyney's uncouth rhymes, and the demerits of himself, his lands and, above all, his ancestry (for ancestry was our satirist's strong point) proclaimed aloud from the Liffey to the Suir.

As an example of Freyney's rhymed invective, the following (taken down as accurately as possible from his own lips) may be quoted here.

A miser is yellow Tim Murphy that
lives at Aghanour—
(May the rats ate up his corn an' the
milk of his cows go sour!)
He turns the poor away wid a notish
on his gate:
(When he comes to the gates of Heaven,
'tis him that'll have to wait!)
Sure his grandfather was a traitor in
the days o' 'Ninety-Eight;
His mother come o' the Kavanaghs
that brought the Saxon o'er;

His father robbed the orphan an'
 grabbed the widow's store.
 Bad cess to his cross-eyed daughter,
 before I'd have her for wife,
 Begob I would want six farms an' tin
 thousand a year for life!
 His sheep is half-kilt wid the hunger,
 an' the crows themselves would die
 If they flew over Aghanour, that is
 always barren an' dhry!

But Count-the-Farmers could praise
 as vigorously as he blamed. Here
 is a verse descriptive of a certain
 respected family of those parts.

The *shoneens* that came wid Cromwell,
 an' the Saxon lords wid their gold,
 Sure there's none o' them matches the
 ———'s, that was famous chiefs of old!
 Good luck to ye, ——— of ———; 'tis a
 Prince ye are by rights;
 An' your ancestbors leathered the
 English in a hundred bloody fights!
 They cheated ye wid their lawyers,
 that darsn't face your sword;
 But ye kept the old house standin', an'
 yours is a plentiful board.
 Your daughters are straight an' hand-
 some, the poor they never mock;
 An' your sons are open-handed, for
 they come of the grand old stock!

And here again is the strolling bard
 upon a farmer who had befriended
 him.

Big Ned Ryan o' Finnan, 'tis himself is
 the full of a door;
 An' honest man, an' a sportsman, an'
 a kindly man to the poor;
 His father, Shawn o' the greyhounds,
 could leap as far as a deer,
 An' he'd drive a ball wid his hurley,
 out over the hills from here!
 There's grass for the cows o' the world
 on the slopes o' Finnan hill;
 An' the buttermilk's fine as silk, an'
 the whiskey is finer still!
 My blessings on Mary Ryan!—herself
 has the eyes o' blue:
 An' the daughters take after the mother,
 for they're handsome heifers too!

The word *heifers*, as applied to
 Edmund Ryan's daughters, was used
 in no derogatory sense; "A fine

young heifer" is a term frequently
 applied to a peasant girl in pastoral
 Ireland.

Count-the-Farmer's doggrel was
 eagerly listened to both by the friends
 and the enemies of those of whom he
 sang. He was never at a loss for a
 warm corner, a good dinner, or a
 "drop o' the crathur." When re-
 citing his verses, with appropriate
 gestures, he seemed rational enough;
 but take him away from his favourite
 theme, strive to converse with him
 upon other topics, and his mind
 seemed as blank as that of poor Matt
 'Kinerney. Politics of a period later
 than the days of O'Connell he could
 not understand; and, when political
 matters were discussed in his presence,
 he displayed all the fretfulness of a
 child forced to listen to a dry subject,
 nor was he happy again, until invited
 to give a specimen of his farmer-
 counting. He spoke the Irish lan-
 guage freely; and his metrical com-
 positions in that tongue were said to
 have been far better than those which
 he delivered in English. He loved
 to follow the hounds (on foot, of
 course) and knew all the stiff fences,
 as well as all the short cuts, in the
 country-side. For some years he was
 confined in a lunatic asylum (through
 the spite, it was reported, of an in-
 fluential person whom he had handled
 none too gently); but the authorities
 finally released him as harmless.

Harmless he assuredly was, just
 as gentle Matt 'Kinerney, and even
 crabbed old Bett Mellon, were harm-
 less; indeed he was in some respects
 a benefactor to the community, for
 his rough rhymings did much to keep
 bad neighbours in order, and to pre-
 serve intact the generous spirit of
 old. Let us leave him, and the other
 Wards of God, to the kindly remem-
 brance of the newer Ireland.

GERALD BRENNAN.

A SONG OF DARTMOOR.

RICH is the red earth country, and fair beneath the sun
 Her orchards in their whiteness show when April waters run ;
 Fair show they in their autumn green when red the apples glow,—
 And yet a lovelier country is that I'm wisht to know.

The country has no borders, the country has no name ;
 Its people are as homeless as any marish-flame ;
 But kind they are, and beautiful, and in their golden eyes
 Their lovers see the gleam that drew forth Eve from Paradise.

Oh happy Pixy-people that dance and pass away,
 That hope not for to-morrow nor grieve for yesterday !
 Oh happy Pixy-people, would that I went with you,
 The way the red leaves travel when the harvest moon is new !

You fear no blight in summer that kills the growing corn ;
 Your hearts have never sunk to see the sun rise red at morn ;
 The brown spate in the river, the drowned face in the Dart,
 Have never dulled a Pixy's eye or hurt a Pixy's heart.

But I have seen the river rise and draw my lover down ;
 And since the Dart has shrunk now too low to let me drown
 And be at peace beside him, why, I would lose this soul
 That makes the daylight dusk to me, since last Dart took her toll.

Oh Pixies, take this heavy soul and make me light as you !
 I care not though one day I pass away like drying dew—
 I only care to sleep no more, to dream no more, but go
 Far from the red earth country, and the cruel streams I know.

THE STORY OF EVANGELINE.

IN other years my eyes had rested with desire on that long straggling mass of cold grey homestead and barns at the upper end of the valley, with the cabbage-headed sycamores on the seaward side of it, the three Scotch firs on the green hillock in front and the knotted crags pressing it closely behind. A brawling river severed the farm's lower grazing-lands lengthwise. Up stream two miles of stony desolation led to the solemn grey precincts of Cumberland's highest peaks; and Bow Fell closed the avenue of screes and fragments of blue rock among the bracken as precisely as a door. Down stream the hills grew beautifully less towards the sea, which on bright days sparkled against the yellow sands of the shore twelve rough miles from this lonely house. The woods and meadows of the lower end of the valley seemed to laugh with cheerfulness in comparison with the savage barrenness of the other end, where one shattered old yew tree, fastened in the southern screes, lorded it dismally over the pent landscape amid the eternal roar or querulous whisper of the waters. The wonder is that Wordsworth missed this yew; it seems to exist only to inspire a sonnet.

And now my opportunity had come. Strolling from the inn one May morning, when the cuckoos were at call in the larch coppice across the beck, I found nut-coloured Peter Tyson nestled among the hyacinths of the hedge-sward, where the first of the gates of the road that climbs toward the farm tells of diminishing population and sheep and cattle to be

kept to their own pastures, the public ease notwithstanding. The man was enjoying his Sunday's rest as they do in these parts, without heed of the patches they exhibit to the critical stranger. I had seen five others like him in a row nearer the inn, with their knees to their chins, silent and absorbed as if they were there to hear the cuckoo instead of going to the little one-belled church a mile down the dale, where they bury their dead at the age of a hundred and indulge the living with but a single service weekly, and that at an hour conveniently inconvenient to many. But Tyson was not of a gregarious turn; he was a bachelor, lodging with a deaf and dumb labourer in the village of ten houses nearest the church. There were times when he was chary even of nodding a salutation. On week days he worked in a mine, and the curse of his employment in such a spot seemed to join hands with the curse upon his unfortunate landlord to throw a shadow over him also. To-day, however he gave me good-day quite blithely, and shot his news: "I'm telt they're crackt oop at Swinside."

"Cracked up?"

"Ay. By Gor, it caps me how e'er a one of 'em meks farming pay in these parts, wi' sic a muck o' stones about. But it's all over at Swinside."

Swinside was the name of the farm set thus in the raw sanctuary of the mountains. My sun-burned friend became so gleefully garrulous about his topic that I soon had enough of him. I walked on up the valley, through gate after gate, past the square white cot of Bow House, with

the strong splashes of colour from its rhododendrons in front, and in another mile past Steep Crag, the last or first farm in the valley, save Swinside itself. Both Bow House and Steep Crag, like Swinside, wore their screen of sycamore on the exposed quarter. They had something else in common. The old yeoman of Bow House had, at the age of seventy, recently married his housekeeper; the tenant of Steep Crag had done the like thoughtful deed a dozen years before. These chances seem to be taken deeply into consideration in the rate of wages at the half-yearly hirings of Cockermouth and Ulverston; a muscular and vivacious young woman, engaged to work about fourteen hours every week-day and six or eight on the Sunday, goes gaily to her doom in the remotest parts of the dales for eight or ten pounds a year; whereas a farm-hand of eighteen or nineteen gets nearly a pound a week with his board, and does not then think himself over-paid. How matters might be in this respect at Swinside I did not know, nor did it concern me; but I purposed looking at the place, and then roaming on towards the Falls, which make a little white score at the end of the valley, visible from afar, and especially so when black clouds darkened the scree-sides and spread their pall over Bow Fell behind.

A barricade of gates guards the approach to Swinside. There is the one which writes *finis* on the road itself, as a scratch to be glorified by record on the Ordnance survey; that is on the near side of a beck which bustles into the river through a brake of alders, birch, and mountain-ash. Another one, just across the bridge, helps to form a curious little enclosure on the bridge itself, useful for sheep. Yet a third secures the courtyard in front of the farm. Having past this ultimate barrier, I was prepared for

the charge of dogs that met me on the cobbled area sacred to the flocks and herds of generations, and over which many a dead yeoman has been carried for the business of burial,—so long a business still in these secluded nooks that it is quite in order for the funeral-cards to bear the line *Refreshments at the Fox and Fiddle after the interment* just beneath the mournful stanza beginning

He has gone, he has gone to his home
in the sky.

I counted eight dogs in this attack, including one with the mange, and one with such an amiable tail that it was plain he was following the leaders against real inclination. But Evangeline Walters soon settled all the rascals. They went fawning about the cobbles in remarkable obedience to her voice, and she herself soon gave me every encouragement in the matter of my wish.

The men-folks, as she called them, were all on the fells; Sunday or no Sunday, work had to be done, at sheep-cleaning time. But first of all she laughed to scorn that nut-coloured man's grievous report. "Crackt oop" indeed! It would be many a year before the Swinside Postlethwaites would, she hoped, come within whisper of such calamity. The accommodation of a lodger was a subject that interested her. "I've never thought of doing it myself," she said, "but now I come to think of it, I shouldn't mind it. Perhaps you'd like to see our spare rooms? Master and his brother they've two beds together, and master's son he has his. There's the servant-lad's room and there's mine. But the other's the best; I clapped three coats of whitewash on it when I did the house in March." I was shown this room, and also the parlour, with its one window of four and

twenty panes never designed to open, and instantly pressed my suit. "Come round in the morning and I'll let you know," said she; "but I declare I'm quite disposed to take you. It's a lonesome life, you ken."

In this way was I installed at Swinside, for I lost no time on the morrow and caught the Swinside housekeeper ere she had finished that morning's gossip with the postman which was the one assured daily distraction of her life. He too had his finger in the pie. "I'm telling her," he said, "that you'd best order some tinned things from our store, if you settle down here. You'd be tired of their eggs and bacon." This to me seemed so unimportant a detail that I put the thought aside. If the weather held so fair as at present, I did not propose to tire of anything at Swinside. There were the mountains at my very door, and at the worst it was not more than nine miles over two passes to a hotel visited daily by coachloads of excursionists who required full tables to satisfy their appetites for the picturesque. An occasional luncheon there in the week would fortify me for severer trials than the constant eggs and bacon with which I was menaced. The postman departed with a final quip for Evangeline. She then formally addressed herself to me. "What folks want to come up here into the mountains for beats me. I've had my stomach-full of them, I can tell you. But you'll like to see the bed now it's made; and then I'll go and do my churning."

I admired the bed, since she seemed to expect such notice, though in truth it was rather commonplace, even to the patchwork quilt on it, with bits in the pattern that looked suspiciously like well-frayed corduroy. There was nothing else in the room to admire. The only decorations on its walls were four solemn funeral-cards in black and

silver set in dark maple frames, which showed up strongly against the white-wash of Evangeline's own laying on. The most ornate of them commemorated Elizabeth Ann Postlethwaite, who had died in 1891, aged forty-nine. "That," said Evangeline, pointing to it, "was my master's first wife." "First?" said I. "Well, then, only one, since you're so particular." She added, with a silvery laugh: "There's no missus in the house now, I reckon, or else it's not me that would be here slaving. What do you think I could have got at Ulverston fair last Thursday at the first of the hirings?" My suggestion of gingerbread was perfectly inadequate. She referred to wages, and flung it at me that though a dozen men were after her, knowing her butter for one thing and her capacities for labour and cheerfulness under the most trying conditions for others, she just heard their offers and smiled at them, refused their ten, twelve, and even fourteen pounds a year and returned to Swinside at a mere eight pounds fifteen. "My mother said I was a little fool, getting so thin and all with hard work; but I came back to the end of the world for the old money and that's how I'm here. The master said I could please myself about having you, and I only hope you'll be satisfied."

With that she ran down to her cream, and for the next hour I was free to settle myself and belongings without close comments of any kind from Evangeline Walters. She sang while she churned; at one time *Sun of my soul*, and then, immediately afterwards, the once popular song about the lady who found herself in Crewe against her wish and required advice from the railway-porter. All the men-folks were "wa'ing gaps,"—that is, mending those apparently purposeless and very tiresome walls which confront one in the mountains

in places where it is particularly awkward to get over them—and I saw none of them until the evening. Evangeline finished her butter, and ere I went up the valley with my fishing-rod called me to look at the two-score speckless pound-pats of it on the slate slabs in the dairy. "I canna think how I do it so well," she said, "for I've hot hands. But the grocers at Seaton say they have no butter like mine. I got a *commended* for it at the last show, and should have took a prize if they'd judged fair. So they all telled me. I'm never showing again, for certain."

Such was my introduction to this old farmstead with the pannelled kitchen and the rafters so low across it that anyone more than five feet nine high was in constant danger of concussion of the brain. The river murmured softly this first day, and was so clear that you could see the moving shadows of the trouts' tails on its stones easier than the trout themselves. A dry north-east breeze was in the dale, at the end of which Bow Fell towered purple, its riven crags like a frown upon it. With little hope of fish I tramped in its direction, above the Falls, to the headwaters of the river, where alone I thought the trouts' simplicity might exceed my own. And here, among Cumberland's grey giants, I stayed until the evening. There were fish to be taken after all, but they were of secondary value to the tonic calm and beauty of this mountainous nook, the calm broken only by the cry of lambs and the softly-echoed voices of the trickling streams, cold from the green springs nearly a thousand feet above the hollow.

When I returned to the Swinside farm and its dogs, it was to find four stolid men at the long deal table between the kitchen-fire and the window, with bacon and bread before

them, and Evangeline Walters, the housekeeper, with her hands on her sides standing and encouraging them to eat: "There's plenty more in the pan," she was saying. She made me known to her masters with some eagerness, falling into the background to see the result. But the result was meagre, for the brothers Postlethwaite were evidently perturbed by the domestic innovation. The elder was a prematurely grey and worn man, steady of eye and slow of speech. His brother also was grey, though still in the thirties, but of the tough, wiry, russet-cheeked kind of men familiar to Cumberland. Young Dick, as Evangeline called him, to distinguish him from his uncle, also Dick, was a splendid specimen of the mountain-breed, twenty years old, big and broad and stolid, though, like the others, with his head on a slight curve, due no doubt to the eternal discipline of the rafters. The servant-lad, Jock, two years younger than Young Dick, had a lively look, which did not belie him. A new-born lamb was wriggling its neck on the hearth, the feeding-bottle with which they had been aiding it in its early fight for life lying by it. From the other side of the hearth came the chirp of extremely young chickens mixed up with a blanket in a basket. A cricket, which I had already heard in the morning, was now in lusty voice from a cranny in the yard-square paving-stones of the floor between the chickens and the lamb. The pallor of the gloaming was upon the men and their surroundings.

"You'll be lonesome here," said Reuben Postlethwaite, "but you're welcome."

I enlarged on my gratitude for the concession of being admitted to Swinside, and would have said much more, had not Evangeline cut me short. "You can go right through now," she

said dictatorially. "Your supper's ready."

Only the servant-lad smiled at this command. He meant his smile mainly for Young Dick, but Young Dick seemed to scowl in response to it. The elder Postlethwaite said, "Ay, you'll be hungry, for certain." And so I went my way.

And now, in the course of the days that followed, serene and swift, the drama and old-fashioned life of this sequestered farmstead unfolded itself to me. To the casual eye there was no drama at all here, just brute existence like that of the cows outside, which climbed to the fell tops in the hot mornings and stood majestically outlined against the blue sky by breakfast-time. The occasional visitor who wandered to the farm for a glass of milk, or to ask for guidance over the mountains, pitied the establishment for its isolation. One could see it in his face as he gazed over the coarse kitchen, though with every nail and shelf of it fulfilling its duty, and made the conventional observation, "This is a very old house." A troop of holiday folk came in thus one morning and disquieted the Postlethwaites over their tea and bacon. A chatterbox of a man, with whiskers and the air of an extremely conscientious churchwarden, was at the head of them; they may have been a Young Mothers' Meeting on their annual jaunt, with a few of the husbands included, or they may have been a selection from his more or less dependent blood-relations. Bread and butter and milk were spread for them, and the chatterbox plied the Postlethwaites with questions about sheep and wool until even the elder Reuben began to show signs of impatience. To every answer the chatterbox uttered a profound and digestive "Indeed!" ere plunging at a fresh inquiry. But when the com-

pany were gone, with farewells shrill, tender, and effusive, all Reuben said in comment on his trial was this: "Yon man ought to know something by now, I'm thinking." "Ay, he ought, for certain, with sic a tongue," the younger Postlethwaite assented. Through my open door (which let upon a sort of private paddock devoted to hens, always, it seemed, in a state of violent joy about recent eggs) there drifted the next minute the bass voice of that whiskered inquisitor as he led the way to the easy fence pointed out to him by Evangeline as a short cut. "Poor creatures," he exclaimed loudly, as he viewed our rather tame rear premises, "so remote from all the blessings and comforts of civilisation!"

Fiddlesticks, as a matter of fact! Remote is after all only a relative word. Why, the previous day Reuben Postlethwaite had spent six hearty hours in Ulverston, to see if he could hire a little lad. Evangeline had pressed for a domestic auxiliary, and her master had risen at four of the clock, made his tea, saddled the dappled galloway, ridden fourteen miles over the fells in the glorious summer morning to the nearest railway-station for Ulverston, dined at an inn and got back to his dear sheep, lambs, and household ere the golden sunset light had faded from the green of the dale and the purple and grey of the mountains. That was one reason why he breakfasted rather late the following day, at a time when his brother had done a good spell of work looking for "wicks" on the sheep herded from the Darkdale part of their very extensive farm. Though a grey man, with the mark of his bereavement upon him, Reuben Postlethwaite was a philosopher as well as one of the most practical sheep-farmers in the shire. His heart was plainly, and by slow avowal at

suitable moments before the kitchen-fire, amid his ten thousand five hundred acres of Swinside ; but his mind was ready at a word to estimate the markets of Whitehaven, ay and even Smithfield itself, and the worth of fat wethers and lambs a week or two ahead.

That little lad, so laboriously engaged, did not, it may be said, find his way to Swinside. It was the engrossing excitement of a week. The young monster took his retaining fee of a shilling fast enough, but he did not come. The heavy tax-cart, used more for the conveyance of manure than for such polite enterprises, was sent miles down the dale to the railway-station to fetch him and his box. Jock returned with a new peony necktie and an astonishing pin, but no little lad. He told a rather moving tale. The guard of the train had set eyes on just such a traveller as this fourteen-year-old so methodically secured for imprisonment in the mountains at two pounds ten for the six months. It was at a station seven miles from the terminus ; he had a brown tin box, and was putting a finger into a short clay pipe such as the Cumberland juveniles boldly indulge in when they aspire to become men. That was all. Swinside was left to draw its inferences. Neither the little lad nor his mother wrote to apologise ; they did not even answer Reuben Postlethwaite's painful letter demanding either the lad's presence immediately or the return of the shilling. Evangeline was almost angry, but eventually she consoled herself. Her master should rise at four that coming Thursday also, make his own tea again, and see what Ulverston could yield him on the third and last of its hiring-days. Help she must have, if only to peel the potatoes. That first little lad had evidently been over-

taken by timidity at the thought of banishment to "sic a spot." Well, she didn't wonder ; she professed to wonder why she herself endured it ; "though I did tell them in Ulverston there wasn't a one of 'em the equal of *my* master, and I say it still. And that's why I'm here, though my mother's for ever blacking me about it, and well she may." In the meantime she made a slave of Jock, the grown servant-lad, who having expressed his opinion that the other young reprobate was maybe "ower big [conceited] for his job," contentedly sat before the heap of potatoes, or picked small gooseberries in the weedy little garden, churned and chopped sticks, over and above his general work of tending cows and calves. His churning was not successful ; he would pause for breath and conversation, and that mournful disease called "pin-heads" straightway broke out in the churn and doubled his toil.

The second Sunday here at Swinside somewhat startled me. They were not accustomed to the adventure of church-going. The incumbent of the parish had the Swinside rabbit-shooting, and that was really the farm's most particular connection with him. He had a detestable habit of setting snares too, whereby one morning the gentle-faced black cat of the establishment came home from a hunting-night under the moon with its right fore-foot in red shreds. They did not put poor puss out of its misery, as would have seemed natural in a town. They hoped a cat of such gentle expression and ordinarily demure domestic habits would get over even so shocking an injury ; and since that same morning the maimed quadruped was as eager as any of its three comrades to leap into one of the tall cream jars set outside to be scalded, and as prompt

to scuttle away on three legs when Evangeline ran out and called them names. No doubt they were not too sanguine about its constitution; but it was not this that startled me. It was the discovery of Reuben Postlethwaite, the grey-haired farmer, and Evangeline Walters, the housekeeper just out of her teens, sitting side by side alone before the kitchen fire. Evangeline was in a pink blouse, wore a fringe, and balanced a trim little ankle on the tap of the boiler.

You see, the necessity of passing through the kitchen from my room to get to the front of the house put the whole establishment somewhat at my mercy, and me at theirs. I had heard no sound in the kitchen, and thought it empty. Evangeline looked round and smiled, and Reuben Postlethwaite said quietly, "Ye'll be going out, I reckon?" Well, I did go out. The other brother and his nephew were leaning against a gate, looking at sheep in a pen, calculating how many would be spoiled by those infernal lustrous green flies which are the devils of the pasture in the summer-time. Jock was sprawled in the washhouse, gloating over a pink half-penny sheet of street ballads bought at the Ulverston fair, which he also had not neglected to attend, with the five pounds ten of his wages in his pocket. But when a shower sent me back in an hour's time, matters were in exactly the same state at Swinside. To be sure, the uncle and nephew had gone to another gate, and I dare say Jock had turned a page, for he was tormenting a fresh melody in a low Sabbatical voice. But inside the house the master and his maid were still side by side before the fire.

"There's nothing," Evangeline explained to me when she brought me my tea, "he likes better than to sit quiet like that, thinking of his first wife. She was a lot older than he was, but

he's always thinking of her. That's what makes him look so delicate like, though he's very strong in the arms. The other men-folks don't so much care for it, especially in winter. They wanted to play cards last Christmas, but he didn't see why they should. It's more restful for the strength to just sit before the fire doing nothing, when work's over."

I did not, of course, ask for this explanation. The girl volunteered it, when she had seen that the door was shut. And then she smiled, in the easy kittenish way which had procured her the nickname of Smiler from a certain staid and white-haired farmer, who occasionally climbed the ridge which separated his sycamores from those of Swinside and joined the Postlethwaites by their fire for an hour or two on Sunday.

Another strand in the web of life in this simple grey old house was displayed the very next day. As usual, I had the place to myself at breakfast when once the "porridges" and bacon were on the table. With her extraordinary cross-pattern of dialects, to which I cannot do justice, Evangeline did not surprise me by giving my Quaker oats this Scotch plural. Her parentage and training had been mixed; a Glasgow father, a Manchester mother, and the board-schools of Barrow-in-Furness had between them taught her tongue something, and the Cumberland dales had added local phrases to her store. It was butter-day again, and the sheep were being gathered three wild miles from the round weather-worn chimneys of the farm. And it was with the "Scotch hands," as she called the wooden spades with which she manipulated the butter,—it was with these in *her* hands that she suddenly dashed into the kitchen and so to my room, bearing an interesting expression of mock alarm on her sprightly

face. " 'Tis the old man ! " she said, in a whisper.

" The old man ? " I repeated.

" Ay, it's him, my master's father. He comes on a surprise now and again. He just creeps up to see what's going on ; maybe he says a word to Mr. Postlethwaite or his brother ; maybe he only hides by the hollow ash near the river and goes away again."

To the commonplace suggestion that she should invite him in to rest, Evangeline gave a hot " Not me " of reply. " I think I see myself a doing it," she added. And then, with mischievous chuckles, she told me particulars, some of which I might almost have surmised had I taken the trouble to weigh the human nature of my host and his family. Reuben Postlethwaite's father had had Swinside himself until about two years previously ; then, his wife dying, he had retired to a plain-faced house at a distance, leaving the care of the farm to his sufficiently adult and capable sons. Evangeline had been a mere drudge in those days, at five pounds the year ; but a clever drudge, so that she felt quite equal to the entire charge of the house and its men-folk when Reuben Postlethwaite offered it to her. " He do so hate strange faces, and his mother had praised my butter before taking to her bed, poor creature ! " This was the poison in the cup of the oldest of all the Postlethwaites. " He've never once spoke a word to me since, and says he'll never set his foot in the house while I'm here. He says I'm bent on marrying one of his sons, he doesn't know which ; and now"—she laughed riotously into the palm of her hand—" and now he and those that don't know better have changed their minds and declare it's Young Dick as I'm after. You'd no idea of all this when you came, I expect ! "

It was obvious after this that I might ask her what Mr. Reuben Postlethwaite said to the vexations of such a family disagreement. " Oh, he ! " said she. " He sticks to me ; says he'll never get such another as me and—wonders at his father, he does. I *do* work, I'll allow ; and I'm cheap. My mother canna think why I stop when I could get my eighteen pounds in Manchester any day. But I tell her I'd just hate to wear caps, and I'd rather do as I like on eight pounds fifteen. I'll go and see what he's after now."

By and by, I myself saw this compassionate old dalesman with the primitive hard pride in him. He was white-haired, with heavy shoulders, and leaned on a stick as he stood by the river eyeing the fells mottled with sheep still bearing the raddled P in a circle which may be found recorded as his mark in that indispensable work, Gate's SHEPHERD'S GUIDE. His attitude was pathetic ; but it became darkly theatrical as he turned again towards the house and then slowly moved away. And yet one could not exactly blame Evangeline Walters for this sad little feud, seeing that she declared she had again and again expressed her wish to leave, so that matters might be righted between father and son, " But the master thinks differently," she said on this point. " He'd rather I stayed on, and he's hoping the old man will give over his softness in time."

On the Saturday before my third Sunday at Swinside the postman brought a parcel for Evangeline Walters. Saturday was scrubbing-day. The girl's sleeves were tucked up almost to her shoulders at an early hour on that day, and my room and the kitchen had a rough time of it from her. My room also had spacious dark blue flags to its floor, which on Saturdays were first scrubbed and

then sanded. I would rather by much have had a Turkey carpet for the evenings, which were sometimes very chilly with damp and dew, but robustly naked stone was the fashion in the valley. It had its advantages, of course: a miry footmark could be removed as soon as made; and after nine o'clock, when everyone except myself went up to bed, I found more amusement in watching and listening to the frolics of the mice on the flags than deal boards would have permitted. The room was large, with white walls, and its comfort all hinged on a pair of old rocking-chairs by the tall blacked chimney-piece, one hooded and winged, like a porter's chair, for a lady averse to draughts, and the other with arms to rest the tired elbows of a man. Its lamp carried a very small wick which made a light feeble save where it was directly focussed, so that even a mouse could be deceived into fancying that all the corners were in thrall to the tranquil opportunities of the night.

There is excuse coming for this curt description of the Swinside parlour with the window of the four and twenty panes. Local history was to be made in it, and that very shortly. Evangeline came in from the postman with the parcel in her hands. "Go along with you, will you!" she had said almost fiercely a moment or two before, and he went. She came in with very bright eyes and blushes on both her cheeks.

"What will you be wanting for your dinner to-night?" she asked rapidly, looking down on the parcel and fingering its string.

Now this was nothing less than her humour. The house could offer no change from eggs and bacon until the sheep-killing time re-opened in September. The one great luxury of the past week had been a dish of spring onions brought in with the

cake and bread-and-butter of afternoon tea; and the girl had sorrowed over my contempt for that innovation. But she could not continue to be humorous at such a moment. "I've something to tell you," she added, as she shut the door stealthily, "I don't want even Jock to know."

"Yes?" said I.

"Postman's asked me."

"Asked you?"

"Wants me,—says he's had his eyes on me ever since I've been in the dale and now he's—in love wi' me. Jabez Ritson wants *me*! Why, he could have his pick of the farmers' daughters from here to Riverside. They're all after his brass buttons. They don't wait for him to come to the house of a morning, but go meeting him to court him. To save him trouble going through the gates,—that's what they say. And such dresses as they do wear! I don't spend any money to speak of on *my* clothes. It all goes to help mother with the other children. I've not saved a penny piece. He—says I'm the best of the whole bunch!"

"And Mr. Postlethwaite?" I suggested.

"That's where it is!" she said eagerly. "But why doesn't he speak? Of course he wants me too. He's said it all ways except with his tongue; but I'm not going to slave on here at eight or nine pounds unless I *know* my prospects. It's not as if it was in a town. In Manchester I could have as many lovers as I wanted, but here—well, you know what it is here. I'm wearying of it, and that's the truth. These are a present from postman." She displayed a pair of skittish brown shoes with pointed toes and a blue silk neckerchief. "They're from his father's shop. He says there are heaps more where they come from, and the old man is getting so deaf

he'll soon have to retire. Wait one moment ; I'll go and put 'em on."

The shoes seemed to fit her excellently ; she returned with her skirts lowered from their workday elevation (a lofty one), to show how daintily her brown feet could peep from cover, and she even made a frolicsome step or two in them, as if to try their dancing quality. I went to the door to study the sky ; it seemed a very proper day for a full meal at Dungeon Ghyll or Coniston. "And so you'll marry the postman?" I said.

The girl started, and for the first time in my experience of her looked really glum. The glumness was succeeded by a puzzled expression almost of appeal. "I—don't know what to do," she said. "Master's over old, I know, but he's such a kind-hearted man. Only he won't speak out."

"You haven't said *yes* to the postman?"

"Said *yes*? The idea! And he only proposed this minute. Not me. *Yes* indeed!"

"But you have accepted his presents."

She changed into a little fury as she tore the blue thing from her neck and scraped off one shoe with the other foot.

"Bother his presents! A cheeky fellow like him!" she cried. "And it's the first I've heard of his father being so deaf as all that."

It may or may not have been an injudicious thing to do, but I wanted to get off to Coniston or Dungeon Ghyll without loss of more time. Also, on first thought, it seemed to me so plain a cure for the half of

Evangeline's dilemma. I made the suggestion, in short, which one would suppose needed no making to so practical and generally ingenious a maiden. "If I were you," I said, "I think I'd tell Mr. Postlethwaite what the postman has done."

"Would you?" she cried, all eyes.

"To be sure I would. Then —"

But I declined to be involved another step in a debate so parlous which might, it seemed, land me, all unawares, in a responsibility larger by much than that of the clergyman who was destined to marry this girl to somebody. I went over the hills and far away, past the latest dead sheep of the farm, which they had incontinently cast into my private paddock to cool in its wool. Nor did I return until the grass of the cow-meadow, with the fringe of wild hyacinths by its eastern wall, was sopped in dew.

Evangeline Walters brought me my eggs and bacon and gooseberry fool with a proud air that evening. She couldn't hold her new secret any better than the other little problems of her industrious and bright young life. "I'm to be master's wife!" she whispered, as she put the cream by the gooseberries.

The next afternoon, being Sunday, Mr. Reuben Postlethwaite sat with Evangeline before the kitchen-fire as usual, with his usual silence, but with his arm round Evangeline's waist. And the two Dicks, uncle and nephew, went from gate to gate, moodily, like baffled conspirators too disappointed even to veil their trouble of mind.

CHARLES EDWARDES.

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF INDIA.

THE theories propounded from time to time as to the best methods of administering the Indian Empire are almost as numerous and diversified as the peoples and castes who make up its vast population. One school of thought favours the wholesale adoption of autonomous institutions, such as have been slowly evolved in the West, while another considers that we have already gone too far in that direction, and that the more patriarchal and benevolently despotic our system of government is the better will it be suited to the various elements which make up the social fabric. Between these extremes there is a wide range for differences of opinion, and it is so well covered that he who, without the aid afforded by personal knowledge of India, would arrive at just conclusions, is liable to find counsel darkened in a multitude of words, and is tempted to seek escape from the din of contending factions by adopting the doctrine which appears most plausible, or is best put by its advocates. This result would be less frequent if the enquirer would apply to each theory the elementary but all-important considerations that India, though an administrative, is not an ethnographic unit; that insuperable barriers, historic, religious, and social, stand in the way, not only of fusion, but of cohesion on the part of communities occupying various stages between the barbarism of the aboriginals and the elaborate but stationary forms of civilisation, of which Brahmanism is the chief example; and that in respect to each stage knowledge and sympathy are essential

elements both in the theory and practice of government.

Defective as was the rule of the East India Company in many respects, the Directors were not unmindful of this latter consideration. From the time of the earliest acquisition of inland territory they required their executive officers to collect accurate information regarding the ancient laws and local usages of the country. Sir William Jones's researches into the literary theory of Indian caste, resulting in the issue in 1794 of his English translation of the laws of Manu, were carried out by order of Lord Cornwallis; and it was by direction of Lord Minto that in 1807 Dr. Francis Buchanan undertook, at the public cost, a survey of "the whole of the territories subject to the immediate authority of the Presidency of Fort William (Bengal)." The report of the survey, which lasted seven years, still lies in manuscript at the India Office. Selections from it, filling three bulky volumes, were published by Mr. Montgomery Martin in 1838, but for the most part the editor omitted the very portions which are less obsolete now, after the lapse of two generations, than any other, and to which Dr. Buchanan had paid special attention—those, namely, in which the castes were described. The omission would have been still more regrettable had the information been collated on a recognised ethnographic system, and thus led up to definite results. Neither Dr. Buchanan nor the investigators who followed him, such as Colonel Dalton, author of *THE ETHNOLOGY OF BENGAL*, worked on accepted lines, or

revealed any acquaintance with the writings and methods of European authorities.

To further researches in the direction taken by these pioneers, the Government of India have hitherto given only occasional and apathetic support, and it is only now, after more than four decades of Crown rule, that the subject is receiving from the State the attention it deserves. At the instance of the British Association a comprehensive ethnographic survey has recently been instituted for the whole Indian Empire, and thus is being removed the long-standing reproach that, with the strongest political inducements to encourage and direct this branch of research, the Indian Government have done less to promote it than perhaps any contemporary administration. The complaint is the more remarkable since in almost every other department of enquiry that Government occupies the first, rather than the last place, in the extent and variety of the information it has collected, often at great cost, and made available to its officers and the public. Such information is periodically renewed in the provincial, departmental, statistical, and general reports which stream forth daily from the Secretariat presses. These blue-books are so detailed and elaborate that no one reads them; and the extent to which their preparation trenches on more useful duties has become so notorious that Lord Curzon has placed an experienced officer on special duty to reduce the dimensions of the evil by prescribing limits to most of the reports and directing the entire abandonment of others. Geological, trigonometrical, cadastral, archæological and other surveys have been carried out with great care and at considerable cost; but ethnographic enquiry

under Government direction has been limited to a single province, although the whole country offers an exceptional field for its pursuit.

The explanation of a neglect at which science has often chafed would seem to be that, immersed in their responsible labours, the Government of India have been too ready to conclude that an ethnographic survey would serve no practical purpose. It is to be remembered that the financial situation of Government, owing to a variety of causes, has, more frequently than not, left little or no margin for researches not having a direct bearing on the actual work of administration. If the accepted official belief has been that to collect caste-customs and take physical measurements would be a luxury subserving scientific and historical interests alone, the long delay in instituting a general enquiry is sufficiently intelligible. But the Governor-General in Council has explicitly disavowed any such opinion at the present time, for the resolution constituting the survey points out that a well-arranged and authoritative record of the customs and domestic relations of the various tribes and castes which compose the framework of Indian life will have its uses "for the purposes of legislation, of judicial procedure, of famine relief, of sanitation and dealings with epidemic diseases, and of almost every form of executive action."

This utilitarian justification for the survey only requires a few moments' reflection to commend itself to the judgment of anyone acquainted with the people of India, and knowing something of the extent to which every department of their existence is governed by the rules of their respective tribes, castes, or sub-divisions. In the administration of justice our courts recognise the customary law (much of it traditional) of all the

races of Hindustan; and this fact alone renders desirable the knowledge of the relations of different castes to the land, their social status, their internal organisation, their rules as to marriage and divorce. Equally important is it that executive orders, local as well as general, should be based on close acquaintance with the people affected by them. Now and again it happens that such orders respecting agrarian disputes, the rights of religious processions, or the suppression of contagious disease, eventuate in serious local rioting; and it is not too much to say that in some instances of the kind, this unrest could have been prevented had the decisions of the Executive been based on more detailed and correct knowledge of the customs and beliefs of the particular sections of the community concerned than was available at the moment,—knowledge which the provincial volumes to be produced under the current survey will supply in an accessible and authoritative form. To no one will these records be more valuable than to the newly-joined English civilian, who for lack of them sometimes makes mistakes which, though small in themselves, loom large in the minds of the people concerned, and often are responsible for an unpopularity which many subsequent years of excellent work and frequent proofs of his genuine sympathy with the people fail to entirely remove. Similarly, the attitude of the Governments and their officers towards movements of social reform, in which their help, legislative or executive, is sought, requires for its determination a close acquaintance with the sentiments, prejudices, and customs of the castes or sections affected; and this should be acquired, or at least be made accessible, before the requisite evidence is coloured by partisanship on

the issues raised by the proposers of change.

Perhaps on no duty discharged by the State has ethnography a more direct bearing than on that which has unfortunately been very prominently before the public in the last few years,—the relief of famine. By the earnest endeavours of Government, and the critical investigations of successive Commissions, especially the one whose report was presented last May, our relief-operations are being brought, theoretically speaking, as near perfection as is possible in any realm of human endeavour; but in actual practice that goal cannot be attained without intimate knowledge of the habits and peculiarities of each section of the people in affected districts. To many of them the kind of food eaten and the hands by which it is cooked are matters of the gravest religious import; and there have been cases where death by starvation has been preferred to the rules in force at relief-camps. Such cases generally arise from the terrors not only in this, but in many subsequent stages of existence, which ostracism from caste conjures up to the Hindu mind, and have not been unknown in the Mahomedan community. For eating in relief-kitchens (*chattras*), in the Orissa famine of 1866, a number of Brahmans and others lost their respective status, and now form a separate and lower caste, called *chatter-khai*. A closer acquaintance with the idiosyncracies of these people, by ensuring the adoption of more suitable means of relief, would have obviated so terrible an alternative to starvation; and ignorance on such points will be inexcusable when every district-office contains in its library a record of the ethnographic survey for the province.

But obvious as these considerations are, it has taken nearly twenty years for the suggestion of the Census

Commissioner of 1881 (Sir William Plowden) that detailed information regarding castes and occupations should be collected, to bear full fruition in the enquiry now in progress. Government adopted the suggestion as a pious opinion, but instead of laying down a definite scheme, they left the initiative in the matter to the local administrations. These latter have too many provincial needs to be met with the limited funds left to them by the central exchequer to be eager to embark on costly optional surveys, and only Bengal took up the proposal. In nominating Mr. H. H. Risley to conduct an enquiry limited to two years, Sir Rivers Thompson, then Lieutenant-Governor, made use of an argument which in itself should have been sufficient to arouse the Government of India from its indifference. Writing early in 1884, he pointed out that the results of Mr. Risley's investigations would be of great value in connection with the next census (1891), but if the enquiry was postponed till then it would be impossible to make it so complete as it could be if at once proceeded with.

The late Census [he wrote] showed how rapidly the old aboriginal faiths are being effaced, and what progress is being made in the absorption of the primitive races in the great system of Hinduism. At the same time, the opening of communications, the increase in the facilities of travel, and the spread of education, are tending to obliterate the landmarks of the Hindu faith, to slacken the bonds of caste, and to provide occupations unknown to the ancient polity. There is nothing to be gained, and much to be lost, by postponing this important work. If it is not undertaken now, a mass of information of unsurpassed interest will be lost to the world.

This strong argument for recording the primitive beliefs and usages of the Indian peoples, ere the process

of their transformation or partial destruction resulting from the impact of modern civilisation was carried any further, was for the time being ignored by the Government of India, excepting in so far as it may have removed obstacles to their acceptance of the Bengal scheme. Before organising the work, Mr. Risley conferred at Lahore with Mr. Denziel Ibbetson, who has lately been nominated to the Governor-General's Council, and with Mr. J. C. Nesfield, of the Educational Service, for the purpose of laying down a plan whereby the researches might proceed on modern lines accepted by ethnographic experts of European eminence, and of defining the nomenclature to be employed. Their efforts to adapt the recognised scientific methods to the special conditions of Indian life, stood the test not merely of expert criticism, but also of practical experiment. But the scheme went much further than was contemplated by Sir William Plowden, with whom, as we have seen, the idea originated. Mr. Risley tells us that this extension was inevitable, directly an attempt was made to give effect to the general idea. So intricate is the fabric of social usage in India, that a hard and fast line cannot be drawn where administrative utility fades away in scientific interest; and hence it was found to be essential to good work that both objects should be kept in view.

To the purposes first named reference has already been made, while those of a scientific character are so obvious as to scarcely require indication. The early history of marriage, the development of the family, modes of relationship, the evolution of inheritance, and the growth of agrarian proprietorship are among the principal problems on which invaluable contributions to the study

of comparative ethnology can be made by research in India. Besides these general problems, there are various questions of special interest to students of Indian history, religions, and literature on which light can be thrown by an accurate record of the actual facts existing at the present day in respect to caste-arrangements. The people themselves are the jealous custodians of primitive ideas and practices which in other countries are only traceable in doubtful survivals. In short, a more promising field for the systematic study of mankind cannot be conceived, and the resolution of Government outlining the present scheme is within the most literal bounds in observing that "India is a vast storehouse of social and physical data which only needs to be recorded in order to contribute to the solution of the problems which are being approached in Europe with the aid of material much of which is inferior in quality to the facts readily accessible in India, and rests upon less trustworthy evidence."

It was with full appreciation of these points that Mr. Risley superintended the enquiries which eventuated in the publication, in four volumes, of his *TRIBES AND CASTES OF BENGAL*. Each district-officer was required to nominate from among his subordinates one or more officers who were willing to assist in collecting information in their respective districts and sub-divisions. Through them the services were obtained of nearly two hundred correspondents scattered throughout the Presidency, who, in their turn, communicated with an indefinite number of representatives of the castes and tribes dealt with. The object kept in view, Mr. Risley tells us, was to multiply independent observation, and to give as much play as possible to the working of the comparative method. The corres-

pondents were instructed to mistrust accounts published in books, and to deal with the people direct. Their reports were tested by comparison with notes on the same caste or section collected by Mr. Risley, with reports from other correspondents in the same or other districts, and with the unpublished notes of the late Dr. James Wise, who during thirteen years' service in Eastern Bengal collected a vast amount of information and verified it with great care, with a view to preparing an exhaustive illustrated monograph, a project he did not live to carry out. To the value and accuracy of Mr. Risley's book, which was published in 1891, testimony was given by the proposal of the British Association that the general investigations now in progress should be under his direction, and by the Government's acceptance of the suggestion. So far as Bengal is concerned, all that will be necessary in the current enquiry will be to revise the *TRIBES AND CASTES OF BENGAL* so that it shall correspond with the other provincial works, for which it is to serve as a model. In the North Western Provinces, also, a considerable body of material is available in the more recent *TRIBES AND CASTES* prepared in leisure hours by Mr. Crooks; but it is described in the Government resolution, as standing in need "of condensation in some parts, and of revision and expansion in others."

These two works constitute the only attempts that have been made in recent times to systematically deal with the ethnographic data of entire provinces. For eight of the ten local Government areas into which British India is now divided no general records, based on modern scientific methods of investigation, exist, though of course a large amount of material lies ready to hand in mono-

graphs, settlement-reports and other official documents. The census affords a starting-point for the enquiry, and in fact the British Association suggested that the data for it should be collected in connection with the enumeration made last March. But there were administrative objections to the adoption of this course, arising mainly from the comparative inefficiency of the agency available for the ordinary work of the census. Moreover, the decennial returns are less valuable as a foundation for ethnographical research than they would have been had the basis of classification adopted when a census was first taken in India been adhered to. It recognised the four well-marked racial elements making up the main body of the population,—the non-Aryans, or aboriginals, the Aryans, the mixed Hindus, and the Mahomedans. In the second census, taken in 1881, the arrangement was altered, and the aboriginal element of the population was chiefly returned as belonging to the low-caste Hindus. Ten years ago there was a further departure from the original plan, by the adoption of hereditary occupation and language as the joint basis of classification, and this was adhered to last March. A census which takes a non-racial basis and fails to separate the aboriginals from the descendants of the Aryan invaders, certainly leaves ample room for supplementary ethnic investigations.

So anxious are Lord Curzon and his advisers that the survey should be economically carried out, that inexpensiveness was laid down as the first condition of its prosecution, the second being that it must produce definite results within a reasonable time, and the third that it must not impose much extra work on the district-officers. These conditions are being met by Mr. Risley offering to supervise the work, in addition to his

other duties, and by the appointment in each province of an officer who, for a small monthly consideration superintends the survey in leisure hours, and who, like Mr. Risley, has the assistance of one whole-time clerk. Local correspondents are being nominated to work on the same lines as those adopted in Bengal fifteen years ago. The information obtained will be collated by the Superintendent, supplemented and tested by his own enquiries and researches in official reports, the journals of learned societies, &c., and ultimately embodied into a systematic account of the people of the province, as already explained. It has been justly complained that uncertainty as to fact is the great blemish of much of European ethnological literature. We may rest assured that Mr. Risley will do all that is possible to obviate a like uncertainty in this instance, and that the tests and precautions he applied to prevent the adoption of mis-statements in his own province fifteen years ago will, so far as possible, be systematically enforced in other parts of India. The offer of substantial rewards for the best monographs sent in by correspondents (each local government having the allotment of two thousand rupees annually for the purpose) will serve as a stimulus to painstaking accuracy, and thus to counteract the frequent indifference of the Indian intellect to historical or scientific fact, and its tendency to accept literary theories without putting them to the touchstone of observation.

In the most favourable circumstances, however, and with the exercise of the greatest care, accuracy in respect to so diversified and complex a social system as that of India must be extremely difficult. Fraudulent claims to belong to higher castes are

often made, and disputed classifications are frequent. In the late census the inclusion of certain castes by the authorities of the North-Western Provinces in the third of the great divisions of Manu, although they considered themselves entitled to a place in the second division, led to prolonged newspaper controversies and to the holding of meetings of protest by the parties affected. Census-officers, as Mr. Risley points out, have sometimes discovered cases in which an unusual caste-appellation, misunderstood and misspelled by an ignorant enumerator, has been misread by a clerk of small local experience, and ultimately transformed past recognition by a printer's error,—a process rendered the more likely by transliteration from the local vernacular into English. Sometimes these obscure entries seem to defy elucidation, and have to be banished to the large group set down in the census reports as *unknown*, belonging, that is, to no recognised caste. This confession of ignorance has frequently to be made, even where no clerical error has occurred, owing to the difficulty of identifying the names of small castes, of religious sects, of sections or septs, titles, and family names in the existing stage of knowledge regarding the internal structure of the Indian social system.

The confusion into which the study of caste is thus thrown supplies a strong argument for the important auxiliary to the enquiry proper which, following the precedent of Bengal has, on the suggestion of the British Association, been added to it, that of anthropometrical measurements directed to determine the physical types characteristic of particular groups. Unsubstantial claims to a high place on the roll of Indian origin may be made, errors may occur in the records, even language and

customs may mislead; but physical characters form a test of affinity of race that cannot be gainsaid. This is especially so in India, where the differences of physical type are more marked and persistent than in any other part of the world, owing principally to the elimination to a very great extent,—in many sections of the population wholly—of the disturbing element of crossing by mixed marriages, consequent upon the caste system of the Hindus and the sectarian divisions of Mahomedans. In Europe the crossing of races constantly obscures their true affinities, and yet the examination of statistics drawn from physical measurements has been found to throw light on the distribution of different race-stocks in the population. It follows that in India, where crossing exists only on a limited scale, anthropometry should result in the detachment of considerable bodies of non-Aryans from the general mass of Hindus, and in referring them, if not to the individual tribes to which they originally belonged, at least to the general category of non-Aryans, and perhaps to such specific stocks as the Dravidian and the Thibetian. The change which modern civilisation is gradually bringing about in Indian society adds emphasis to the necessity for recourse to methods of research supplementary to the mere collation of customs and beliefs, more exact in character and less open to misleading results. The value of the method now under mention was amply demonstrated in the Bengal enquiry; and it may be said that the tendency of the data obtained was to confirm not only the long chain of Indian tradition from the Vedas downwards, but also the standard theory of caste set forth by the late Sir William Hunter—that of a protracted struggle between a higher and a lower race.

To the proposal of the British Association to further supplement the general enquiry by obtaining photographs of typical members of various races, and of archaic industries,—the services of photographers being placed at the disposal of the investigating officers for the purpose—the Government of India have given a decided negative. Expense, interference with the other portions of the enquiry, the existence in the India Office library of a large collection of photographs, and the absence of any real scientific value in them, are the reasons assigned for this refusal. In short, says the resolution, the Government of India “are not disposed to spend a large sum on making the volumes on ethnography more popular and attractive.” But it is intimated that if the local administrations wish to introduce photographs into the volumes produced under their orders they can do so,—at their own expense. This permission to the local Governments to spend money on a feature which the Supreme Government will not undertake is scarcely consistent with the general objections, other than that of expense, raised in the resolution.

By working on the lines that have been indicated, it is estimated that the survey can be completed in five years at a cost, exclusive of printing, of only £10,400. In view of the importance of doing the work thoroughly a much larger outlay would be abundantly justified should it be needed, and if the scheme errs at all it is certainly not on the side of extravagance. But that being so, there is all the more reason why ethnologists and scientific societies in Europe and America should cordially respond to Lord Curzon’s request to them to assist the Director, hampered as he is by the eternal want of pence which vexes public men, with their advice and suggestions, and to supply him with copies of works bearing on these investigations. Under Mr. Risley’s direction, and with such assistance, the survey may confidently be expected to yield most valuable results both in respect of administrative efficiency and of the scientific study of mankind, whom Pascal calls “the glory and scandal of the universe.”

F. H. BROWN.

SOME AUSTRALIAN VERSE.

A COMMONWEALTH is not the only new thing across the seas; there is also the lay of the Native-born. There is growing up a school of Australian verse, already showing promise of a vigorous life, the properties of a genuine school of literature. The Australian has a character of his own. He has the Englishman's stubbornness and his practical frame of mind; he has his love of sport, his humour, his gay recklessness in field or fight. But he has also shaken off much in the old character for which there is no place in his new home. He is not insular, nor is he feudal. There is no earl in his county, no squire in his village. He holds himself the equal of any man (in theory, at any rate,) and will take the law from none. So his politics are different from ours, and in his literature there is a new note. We read it with impressions of a curious mixture of old and new. On the one hand, there is all the spirit of the sturdiest English poetry; men, human life, human character, deeds and actions, are its theme. On the other, we quickly detect a new colouring, a fresh spirit; the colours of a life unknown to men in the old world, the spirit of the citizen of a country that has not yet come to manhood. It is the Englishman speaking in accents strange to us. The new nation is slowly and unconsciously finding its voice; it is beginning to articulate.

A great chance, a great destiny! The white man, with faculties fully developed, is placed in an untouched land to work out a new history. The finished product of centuries of civi-

lisation is, so to speak, born again. He renews his youth; the sheet is clean, the past has vanished, the future is before him. Thus we get new experiences, a new civilisation, a new poetry. There, in hardy frontier life, in bush-clearings, stations, and camps, among his rough and vigorous companions, the native-born wins his new experience. He looks around on novel scenes with open eyes. There is nothing like it in England.

The hush of the breathless morning
On the thin, tin crackling roofs,
The haze of the burned back-ranges,
And the dust of the shoeless hoofs.

All is changed. The setting is different; trees, birds, and animals are of another type. There is the sombre forest, the drought and the flood, the endless sheep and cattle ranges, the long days on horseback, the limitless plains. The fox has become dingo or wallaby, the robin the bell-bird, the elm the wattle. Only the gay and sturdy spirit is unchanged. In place of beech and oak, of meadow and hedge-row, of "moan of doves in immemorial elms," of

the English skylark
And spring in the English lane,

the landscape is one of creeks and long sun-burned plains, of she-oaks and gum trees, of the scent of the musk from the wattle-tree blossom, of the parrot's scream and the laugh of the great king-fisher. You read how

We saw the fleet wild horses pass,
And the kangaroos through the Mitchell grass,

The emu ran with her frightened brood
All unmolested and unpursued.

or how,

Beneath a sky of deepest blue where
never cloud abides,
A speck upon the waste of plain the
lonely mailman rides.
Where fierce hot winds have set the
pine and myall boughs asweep,
He hails the shearers passing by for
news of Conroy's sheep.
By big lagoons where wildfowl play
and crested pigeons flock,
By camp fires where the drovers ride
around their restless stock.
And past the teamster toiling down to
fetch the wool away,
My letter chases Conroy's sheep along
the Castlereagh.

(Paterson.)

In a word, we are opening a new
chapter in literature.

The Australian is a lucky man.
Old Europe, now and again we think,
has run her race. She has toiled and
sweated through her centuries and
worked out her salvation, but the
freshness is gone. Where are the
light hearts? Where is the cheery
adventurer? Not at any rate in our
literature; maybe you will find him
in our streets and schools, but not
among our poets. One says the world
is too much with us; another likens
England to the weary Titan stagger-
ing under a burden greater than she
can bear; the American professes to
hold us as of no account at all. But
the Australian is young, happy-go-
lucky, gay:

He saddles up his horses, and he
whistles to his dog:

Our young poets of the time are dole-
ful and pensive and much given to
sadness of soul. The Australian
cares for none of these things. Little
he recks of the morrow: he joins
sturdily in the rough life around him;
he is out of doors, he rides and races,

shoots and drinks; for long months
he is alone with nature. And his
poetry tells us of all this. It is real,
it breathes, it lives. The poet tells
us exactly what he has seen, what he
has done among his fellows, what
he has gone through in long lonely
days and nights at his station. Now
he rises to high moods of apprecia-
tion of natural beauties; now he easily
sketches the humours of this life of
bushmen and country towns. It is
not *vers de société*, the verse of Præd
or Mr. Austin Dobson: the art is
not so subtle, the humour is broader;
but the men are simpler, the scenes
are more human. It is not fashion
or high society we read about, but
healthy home-spun humanity; we see
the town of Dandaloo—

The yearly races mostly drew
A lively crowd to Dandaloo—

and so on in a strain that is neither
of Calverley nor of Bret Harte.
Rather, if we may suggest it, we
have here a mellow edition of
Dickens's humour, which we take to
be on the whole the most essentially
British in our literature. Add to
this humour a sense of natural beauty
such as you will hardly find in
Dickens, but rather in Tennyson and
Matthew Arnold, and you have the
component elements of Australian
bush-verse. There is not the salt sea
strain; it does not smell of the brine;
you shall not read here "of Nelson
and the North," nor of "a wet sheet
and a flowing sea," for the conditions
are other. The bushman and his
horse are the heroes of the piece.
But it is vigorous verse; the pulse
beats high, the lives are broad, free,
and strong.

For the latter-day Englishman,
somewhat oppressed with culture,
who is told on every hand that Eng-
land is going down hill and is being

outstripped by the German and American in the race of life, who sees himself surrounded by melancholy prophets, doleful bards, or who is imprisoned in a vast expanse of brick and mortar, for such a one there is something exhilarating in this Australian poetry. What if the poet paints only the lights and omits the shadows? He is bringing forth the treasures out of his own heart; if the colours are bright, the picture is not therefore untrue. Here is a breezy life; here the fresh winds of heaven blow; here the men ride and laugh, drink and have their rousing chorus, work and race. Here men are free and equal.

I went to Illawarra where my brother's
got a farm,
He has to ask his landlord's leave
before he lifts his arm;
The landlord owns the country side—
man, woman, dog, and cat,
They haven't the cheek to dare to
speak without they touch their hat.

It was shift, boys, shift, for there
wasn't the slightest doubt
Their little landlord god and I would
soon have fallen out;
Was I to touch my hat to him? Was
I his bloomin' dog?
So I makes for up the country at the
old jig-jog.

(Paterson.)

Little the bushman cares for the
morrow. He lives carelessly, for the
moment, not a high ideal, it may be,
in theory, but it works out all right.
What does it matter to him what
to-morrow brings? Rough, hardy,
easy-going, such is the picture we
have of him, and his mess-mate, and
his good horse.

In my wild erratic fancy visions come
to me of Clancy
Gone a-droving "down the Cooper"
where the Western drovers go;
As the stock are slowly stringing,
Clancy rides behind them singing,
or the drover's life has pleasures
that the townsfolk never know.

And the bush hath friends to meet him,
and their kindly voices greet him
In the murmur of the breezes and
the river on its bars;
And he sees the vision splendid of the
sunlit plains extended,
And at night the wondrous glory of
the everlasting stars.
(Paterson.)

Another recalls his old bush-life:

And often in the sleepless nights I'll
listen as I lie,
To the hobble-chains clink-clanking,
and the horse-bells rippling by.
I shall hear the brave hoofs beating, I
shall see the moving steers,
And the red glow of the camp-fires as
they flame across the years,
And my heart will fill with longing just
to ride for once again,
In the forefront of the battle where the
men who ride are Men.
(Ogilvie.)

It is no anæmic muse we listen to;
here we have flesh and blood, arms
and the man.

The three Australians who interest
us most as bush-poets are Adam
Lindsay Gordon, A. B. Paterson, and
Will Ogilvie. We take it they are
the three best examples of the poetry
we have endeavoured to describe, the
poetry which is not the work of the
student or the recluse but of the man
of action. Australian opinion reckons
Gordon as the founder, as well as the
best writer of this poetry. He is too
well known in England to need intro-
duction here. Some of his poems, as
a recent anthologist of Australian
verse well says, are "full of solemn,
dignified manfulness, and once read,
can never be wholly forgotten." His
verse was the first to reflect the
settler's real life, and he began the
cult of the horse and his rider which
is part of the national creed to-day.
The best of his bush-poems are to
this day unmatched of their kind.
Enough if we quote once more the
oft-quoted SICK STOCK-RIDER.

'Twas merry in the glowing morn,
among the gleaming grass,
To wander as we've wandered many
a mile,
And blow the cool tobacco cloud, and
watch the white wreaths pass,
Sitting loosely in the saddle all the
while.

The deep blue skies wax dusky, and
the tall green trees grow dim,
The sward beneath me seems to
heave and fall;
And sickly, smoky shadows through
the sleepy sunlight swim,
And on the very sun's face weave
their pall.
Let me slumber in the hollow where
the wattle-blossoms wave,
With never stone or rail to fence my
bed;
Should the sturdy station children pull
the bush-flowers on my grave,
I may chance to hear them romping
overhead.

So he wrote in the solitude or
hardships of his life in Victoria and
South Australia. We can but re-
gret that the best of his work is so
limited in quantity, and that many
of his other pieces are of such inferior
quality; but he has left his stamp
decisively on Australian literature.

Our second writer is Mr. Paterson,
of *THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER*,
which is highly popular in Australia
and not unknown here. He does not
match Gordon at his best, but he is
sane, humorous, sensible, with a wide
experience of man, life, and nature,
as he knows them. His mind, while
always open to the impressions of
beauty in nature, is equally appre-
ciative of the comic side of the pic-
turesque society around him. He
hits off easy sketches of colonial life
and manners; again he paints scenes
of the natural world touched with
genuine charm. At times his poetry
is barely more than humorous verse,
the jingle of the rhyming journalist.

On Western plains where shade is not,
'Neath summer skies of cloudless
blue,
Where all is dry and all is hot,
There stands the town of Dandaloo—
A township where life's total sum
Is sleep, diversified by rum.

He excels in easy portraits of the
station-life in New South Wales
with a breezy background of nature,
as for instance in the delightful
sketch of *SALTBUSH BILL*, "a drover
tough as ever the country knew,"
and its graphic exposition of the
drover's law.

Now this is the law of the Overland
that all in the West obey,
A man must cover with travelling sheep
a six-mile stage a day;
But this is a law which drovers make,
right easily understood,
They travel their stage where the grass
is bad, but they camp where the
grass is good;
They camp, and they ravage the
squatter's grass till never a blade
remains,
Then they drift away as the white
cloud drifts on the edge of the
saltbush plains.

From camp to camp and from run to
run they battle it hand to hand,
For a blade of grass and the right to
pass on the track of the Overland.
For this is the law of the Great Stock
Routes, 'tis written in white and
black—
The man that goes with a travelling mob
must keep to a half-mile track;
And the drovers keep to a half-mile
track on the runs where the grass is
dead,
But they spread their sheep on a well-
grassed run till they go with a two-
mile spread.

So the squatters hurry the drovers on
from dawn till the fall of night,
And the squatters' dogs and the drovers'
dogs get mixed in a deadly fight;
Yet the squatters' men, though they
hunt the mob, are willing the peace
to keep,
For the drovers learn how to use
their hands when they go with the
travelling sheep.

But, on the whole, we like the author best in his more natural mood, in his descriptive pieces, whether of man, horse, or scenery, when he sometimes rises to passages of real beauty and truth.

The roving breezes come and go
 On Kiley's Run,
 The sleepy river murmurs low,
 And far away one dimly sees
 Beyond the stretch of forest trees—
 Beyond the foothills dusk and dun—
 The ranges sleeping in the sun
 On Kiley's Run.

* * * *

I see the old bush homestead now
 On Kiley's Run,
 Just nestled down beneath the brow
 Of one small ridge above the sweep
 Of river-flat, where willows weep
 And jasmin flowers and roses bloom,
 The air was laden with perfume
 On Kiley's Run.

Or in this Theocritean picture :

The roving breezes come and go, the
 reed beds sweep and sway,
 The sleepy river murmurs low, and
 loiters on its way,
 It is the land of lots o' time along the
 Castlereagh.

Or in this again, the voice of the
 wind :

But some that heard the whisper clear
 were filled with vague unrest ;
 The breeze had brought its message
 home, they could not fixed abide ;
 Their fancies wandered all the day
 towards the blue hills' breast,
 Towards the sunny slopes that lie
 along the riverside.

The verse, metre, and thought may be plain, but they are direct, real, and not without a touch of beauty. After all, there is some merit in simplicity ; a highly fastidious taste is not necessarily a sound one. Lastly, we note in our author a manly sympathy with weakness or poverty. He feels the hardness and squalor of town life and

crowded cities ; he is a man as well as a poet.

The last of our three bush-poets hails also from New South Wales, Mr. Ogilvie, whose *FAIR GIRLS AND GRAY HORSES* is in high favour in Australia. Though the influence of Mr. Kipling is plain in his work,—as in a less degree it is in Mr. Paterson's, who, however, holds more strongly of Gordon—yet he has his own note too ; the line runs spontaneous, the inspiration flows free. The danger is that his language will carry him away, that the sound will overwhelm the sense. But against that danger his practical experience of life should stand as a safeguard ; he has surely seen and done too much to be ever the victim of mere words. He has roughed it with the others, has lived the bush-life, has ridden and driven, has worked the coach, has camped and starved, frozen or burned in dry Australian summers. His verse breathes the free and careless frontier life of New South Wales and Queensland, of days of drought and flood, of cattle-driving, of hard drinking, of hard riding, of days and nights passed under the air of heaven. His verses go with a swing and a force, and always have the stamp of reality behind them. Take the opening piece, one of the best in the volume, "From the Gulf."

Store cattle from Nelanjie ! The mob
 goes feeding past,
 With half a mile of sandhill 'twixt the
 leaders and the last ;
 The nags that move behind them are
 the good old Queensland stamp,—
 Short backs and perfect shoulders that
 are priceless on a camp.
 And these are *Men* that ride them,
 broad-chested, tanned and tall,
 The bravest hearts among us and the
 lightest hands of all ;
 Oh, let them wade in Wonga grass and
 taste the Wonga dew,
 And let them spread, those thousand
 head,—for we've been droving too !

Store cattle from Nelanjie; By half
a hundred towns,
By Northern ranges rough and red, by
rolling open downs,
By stock-routes brown and burnt and
bare, by flood-wrapped river-bends,
They've hunted them from gate to
gate,—the drover has no friends! . .

* * * *

Store cattle from Nelanjie! They're
mute as milkers now;
But yonder grizzled drover, with the
care-lines on his brow,
Could tell of merry musters on the big
Nelanjie plains,
With blood upon the chestnut's flanks
and foam upon the reins;
Could tell of nights upon the road,
when those same mild-eyed steers
Went ringing round the river-bend and
through the scrub like spears.
And if his words are rude and rough,
we know his words are true,
We know what wild Nelanjies are,—
and we've been droving too!

Store cattle from Nelanjie! Their
breath is on the breeze;
You hear them tread, a thousand head,
in blue-grass to the knees;
The lead is on the netting fence, the
wings are spreading wide,
The lame and laggard scarcely move—
so slow the drovers ride!
But let them stay and feed to-day for
sake of Auld Lang Syne;
They'll never get a chance like this
below the Border Line;
And if they tread our frontage, what's
that to me or you?
What's ours to fare, by God they'll
share! — for we've been droving
too!

Another side of station-life is
touched in the piece called "At the
Back o' Bourke," a side barely hinted
at by Gordon, whose regrets are
mainly for the life of the old world
which Mr. Ogilvie never knew.

Where the Mulga paddocks are wild
and wide,
That's where the pick of the stockmen
ride,
At the Back o' Bourke!
Under the dust clouds dense and brown,

Moving southwards by tank and town,
That's where the Queensland mobs
come down—
Out at the Back o' Bourke!

* * * *

That's the land of the wildest nights,
The longest sprees and the fiercest
fights,

At the Back o' Bourke!
That's where the skies are brightest
blue,
That's where the heaviest work's to do,
That's where the fires of Hell burn
through—

Out at the Back o' Bourke!

That's where the wildest floods have
birth,

Out of the nakedest ends of Earth,

At the Back o' Bourke!

Where poor men lend and the rich ones
borrow,

It's the bitterest land of sweat and
sorrow—

But if I were free, I'd be off to-morrow,
Out at the Back o' Bourke!

The life described may not always
be a nice one, nor will it do to ex-
amine its manners or morals too
closely. Where men are doing the
rough work of the world, it would be
ridiculous to expect sentiments and
manners which would please girls'
schools or respectable suburbs. We
find in our author a series of glowing
pictures drawn from a simple and
elemental state of society; we find
men described by a man. It is a
full-blooded style, no doubt, of which
one might easily have too much. But
Mr. Ogilvie has the root of the matter
in him; he has inspiration, and he can
move us.

If Ruskin's word be right, and
"there is but one thing worth saying,
and that is what we have seen for
ourselves," then these writers, and
others of the same school whom we
have not now time to examine, should
be on the right track, for they tell of
their own experiences, drawn at first
hand from their own lives. It is
much enduring Ulysses or Othello

speaking in unvarnished accents of disastrous chances, moving accidents ; it is the plain man telling us what he has seen, heard, and done, in tolerable, often in good, sometimes in really excellent verse. If the verse be polished, we may then get true poetry ; if not, at any rate we have reality, such as no study or research can give. For this reason we have not included Henry Kendall in our list, though many Australians put him first of all their poets. And on one side he is the first. As a scholar and an artist in verse, from the point of view of finish and style, he is superior to the rest, Gordon and all. But if we judge a poet from his matter, from his passion, from his power to appeal to the heart, we must put him elsewhere. He writes for the educated and the literary ; Gordon and his successors wrote for the common man whom they had known, and the common man has fastened on Gordon as Scotsmen on Burns. Some of Kendall's work is elaborated with extraordinary care and finish. Take this piece, for example, "The Hut by the Black Swamp."

Across this hut the nettle runs,
And livid adders make their lair
In corners dank from lack of suns,
And out of fetid furrows stare
The growths that scare.

Here Summer's grasp of fire is laid
On bark and slabs that rot and breed
Squat ugly things of deadly shade,
The scorpion, and the spiteful seed
Of centipede.

Unhallowed thunders harsh and dry
And flaming noon-tides mute with
heat,
Beneath the breathless, brazen sky
Upon these rifted rafters beat,
With torrid feet.

And night by night, the fitful gale,
Doth carry past the bittern's boom,
The dingo's yell, the plover's wail,
While lumbering shadows start, and
loom
And hiss through gloom.

Gordon could not have written like that, nor perhaps would he have cared to try, for there is no human interest in the piece. Gordon thought out half his poems in the saddle ; Boake mustered cattle when he rhymed ; and man and man's doings and fortunes and belongings, down to his horse and his dog, alone concern them. They were men of action and wrote for men of action. Kendall is the student : he writes for the literary world, and the literary world admires him ; but the only writer the stockman knows is Gordon.

In these writers, then, we see the straightforward and plain (it would not do to say the unlettered) colonial speaking, with an unexpected amount of literary quality as well. We see the emigrant, or native-born, steadily devoted to his race and his new home. It is no dreamy or sentimental pride in his land,—the mountaineer's unconscious passion for his mountain home ; but strenuous, ardent, even aggressive. It is a fighting pride, which challenges the world to produce a better than one's own ; a hot and generous pride which covers impartially one's race and blood, colony, district, station, chum, horse, dog and rifle, yet humorous enough to laugh at itself, if need be—though it will not let others laugh.

The Australian is rooted in the soil ; and his verse clings tenaciously to the ground in which it has grown.

Oh ! rocky range and rugged spur and
river running clear,
That swings around the sudden bends
with swirl of snow-white foam,
Though we, your sons, are far away,
we sometimes seem to hear
The message that the breezes bring to
call the wanderers home.
The mountain peaks are white with
snow that feeds a thousand rills,
Along the river banks the maize grows
tall on virgin land ;

And we shall live to see once more
those sunny southern hills,
And strike once more the bridle track
that leads along the Bland.
(Paterson.)

Nowhere else, perhaps, in modern verse do we find such continuous, endless reflection of the world of nature, rarely such freedom and buoyancy. It is the gay spirit of a young nation, the firmness of the grown man, the large horizon of the son of nature. He has lived the settler's or countryman's life; nature has become part of his very soul, and he cannot speak but in terms of her.

The night winds are chanting above you
A dirge in the cedar trees,
Whose green boughs groan at your
shoulder,
Whose dead leaves drift to your
knees.

You cry, and the curlews answer;
You call, and the wild dogs hear;
Through gaps in the old log fences
They creep when the night is near.

I stand by your fenceless gardens,
And weep for the splintered staves;
I watch by your empty ingles,
And mourn by your white-railed
graves;

I see from your crumbling doorways
The whispering white forms pass,
And shiver to hear dead horses
Crop-cropping the long gray grass.

Where paddocks are dumb and fallow,
And wild weeds waste to the stars,
I can hear the voice of the driver,
The thresh of the swingle-bars;
I can hear the hum of the stripper
That follows the golden lanes,
The snort of the tiring horses,
The clink of the bucking-chains.
(Ogilvie.)

This is the poetry of man in the bush and in the field,—man, his horse his work in the world of nature. We may fairly describe it as something new in literature. For the freedom and *abandon* we must go back to the early poetry of nations, the *minnelied*, the folk-song, a peasantry's out-pourings; for here we have verse as direct, as free, as living, but we have all this in the hands of educated men, heirs of a long line of letters. They can feel as the young, and have the trained minds of the old; they have all our poetic traditions at hand to start with on their new life. We shall expect therefore to see much from them in time. At present, though their outlook be wide, the landscape is somewhat monotonous, though their experiences be many, they are not diverse. Their criticism of life (to borrow a memorable phrase) is as yet, and inevitably, somewhat immature; the strings of their lyre are few, and their voices are strangely alike. But in time they should pass into "an ampler ether, a diviner air"; if something of the old recklessness, the old gaiety must go, its place should be taken by thought, by experience working in a larger field to finer issues. We shall look to them for something far different from the light and mocking spirit of the American writer. We shall expect something masculine and strong, true to the English tradition, but of genuine colonial character.

A SNUG LITTLE SHOOTING-BOX.

ANY hard-worked Londoner who wants a month's perfect repose, and is at the same time something of a sportsman, will envy me, I think, the quarters in which I found myself in the middle of last September. In a sheltered corner of the north-west coast where the fuschias grow luxuriantly in the hedges, far away from any large town or considerable village, stand a few cottages and farmhouses which, with the old church and parsonage, constitute a little hamlet representing a parish of respectable dimensions. They stand on one side of a small valley through which trickles a narrow brook bordered by some fine meadows, though here and there becoming swampy or overgrown with rushes and thistles. The rising ground on either side shows a long stretch of stubble, turnips, and potatoes, among which stand up at various points rocky knolls, or banks, covered with gorse and fern. On the other side of the further one of these ridges you will descend into another little valley through which runs a smaller stream which some might call a ditch, the water being almost hidden from view by the brambles and thick coarse grass overhanging it.

The particular house in which I was lodged was once the manor-house, and still retains outwardly much of its original appearance when it was the home of an old family of gentry contented in those days with smaller accommodation than is now required by the same class of society. It is approached from a cross-country road down an avenue of sycamores, at the

top of which stands the stack-yard, telling its own tale of changed fortunes. An iron gate at the bottom of it admits us into a tiny court-yard, out of which a little door opens into the garden and the front entrance to the house. Away to the right lie stables, cow-houses, pig-styes, and all the usual out-buildings of a thriving farmstead. Passing through the door aforesaid you come upon a cool green grass-plot, overshadowed by a perfect thicket of trees, and thence pass under a verandah running along the whole side of the house. There is almost an air of the cloister about the whole scene, so cool, so silent, so ancient. The door of the verandah serves as the front door. For where one originally stood there is now only a wide aperture showing the principal staircase; and a curious legend attaches to it. It is said that a former owner in the far past being deserted by his newly married wife, not in favour of a lover but owing to some domestic difference, gave orders that the front door should stand open day and night to receive her on her return, which he watched for daily, it is said, for years. She never came back; but the door was never closed again, so runs the story, into the truth of which we must not enquire too curiously. The best view of the house is from the north. From the hill beyond the brook you see only the tall grey chimneys and gables peeping through what seems to be a grove of elms, ashes, and sycamores. From this spot it is all the old manor-house, picturesque in its

decay, and stimulating the imagination to weave all sorts of romances concerning its past history.

Here then I took up my abode for three weeks,—“A home of ancient peace,” as I repeated to myself almost every morning and evening. The house was occupied by the tenant of a friend of mine who owned a large estate here where the game was preserved by the farmers, and where he came himself to shoot for a week every season. He had been kind enough on this occasion to reserve some capital partridge-ground for myself, on which not a shot had been fired before my arrival. He left the next day; so there I was, monarch of all I surveyed, free to go out and come in, to go to bed and get up, to shoot energetically, or saunter about lazily, just as I chose. It was a delightful time! For the house and all around it had a charm of its own for me which made an off-day nearly as enjoyable as one devoted to sport. My hostess, who at her brother's death had succeeded to the tenancy of the farm, was a most ladylike and charming Welshwoman, between forty and fifty, and an excellent cook. I brought my own wine and whiskey and a supply of novels, and for only too brief a period felt that life had nothing better to give.

The old-fashioned garden in which apple-trees and sycamores, yew-trees and hazels, the ash and the holly all grew together among gooseberry and currant-bushes, roses and rhododendrons, potatoes and cabbages in the most picturesque confusion, was surrounded by a crumbling stone wall ten or twelve feet in height overgrown with ivy, lichens, and mosses; and to judge from its appearance it must have counted its age by centuries. On a hot day the shade of this secluded bower, half garden, half thicket, was inexpressibly grateful, and its silence

and repose as you returned from shooting were equally refreshing. The old gravel walks by which it is traversed were once trodden by ladies and gentlemen of long descent in hoops and periwigs; and what were once three snug little summer-houses, now in ruins, placed in convenient corners, may have listened once upon a time to much the same kind of conversation as was reported by the Talking Oak. Now, however, the whole place is only a paradise for birds, who seem to build here undisturbed, and take their share of the fruit unconscious of nets or guns. The garden swarms with black-birds and thrushes old and young, and all perfectly tame. As I look out of my bedroom window in the morning I see the mistletoe thrushes settling on the big holly which stands about ten yards off, making a prodigious fuss about something, probably about the berries. A water-wagtail trips along the roof of the verandah which lies just beneath me; a pair of fly-catchers jerk themselves backwards and forwards from a low wall to an adjacent pear tree; the long-tailed tit and the blue tit, chaffinches, green linnets, and bullfinches may all be seen in the course of half an hour's stroll through this leafy and tangled wilderness. In the evening I watch with never failing interest the whole feathered tribe going to roost. The thrushes seem to be fighting for the best place in the big holly; and where the topmost branches of a venerable and wide-spreading ash and a luxuriant sycamore are intertwined so closely as to resemble a single tree, a whole bevy of starlings have established their night quarters. The noise kept up during the hour of bed-time by all alike is one of the most cheerful and amusing sounds in nature. The full rich chuckle of the thrushes and blackbirds, the chirruping of the sparrows and

other small birds, and the shriller twittering of the starlings, who seem unable to make up their minds till they have vanished and returned again half a dozen times, make up a concert which I would not miss for the finest entertainment ever given at His Majesty's theatre.

As the shades of evening begin to fall the garden gradually grows silent, and I re-enter the house just as a white owl flits over the roof, and betake myself to the dining-room where rabbit soup, Welsh mutton, and the most delicious apple-tart and cream seem still more delightful in an old dark wainscotted room with a low ceiling, a dignified tabby cat, the picture of repose perched on one side of me, and the dog of the house, a nice little Irish terrier, regarding me wistfully on the other.

The next morning is fine, and I prepare for a start immediately after breakfast. I have only a rather wild spaniel and a boy to carry game, cartridges, and lunch. I make my way through the farmyard down to the brook and so on to the rising ground beyond, and, after crossing two grass fields, come to a narrow strip of turnips running between two wide patches of stubble. I know of old that this is a favourite spot, and that the birds, after feeding on the stubble, are sure to have run in among the swedes which happen to be quite dry. As they have never been disturbed they will lie almost as well on the twentieth of September, the day I began, as they would on the first; and I had not gone half way down the turnips when the straining of Mungo at his leash, and the forward cock of his ears warn me to be on the alert. In another moment up get seven or eight birds within beautiful shooting-distance, and taking over the stubble to the left give me an easy cross shot. They fly so close together that I cannot

help taking two with the first barrel, and knock over another with the second. A good beginning, — too good perhaps to last. Coming back up the turnips one old bird rises up in front of me rather wide. I hit him very hard, but he gets over the fence at the top of the field, and I can see no further. I marked the line he took, however, and feel sure he must be down in one of the grass-fields on the other side. I now let Mungo loose, and set him to hunt the hedgerows, which are here as a rule composed of high earthen banks, with brambles and gorse growing over them and deepish ditches on both sides. For some time our search is in vain, but just as I am thinking of giving it up Mungo suddenly stops short, turns his nose to the ditch and pricks up his ears. Then, a sudden pounce and he has got him—good dog!—bring him here—and up he comes with the bird in his mouth, and with a good conscience too, for he has not bitten it, a trick he is somewhat given to.

Proceeding down hill over another field or two leading to the other little hollow first mentioned we stop at the gate of a field bearing a splendid crop of turnips, to consider the best way of taking them. Before moving on, however, the boy frantically calls my attention to a glorious spectacle down below. A large covey of birds, moved, I suppose, by someone in an adjoining stubble, are skimming across the bottom of the turnips which run right down to the other little brook, and presently pitch altogether in some potatoes alongside of them. The brook is my boundary; I have therefore to go quietly down one side of the field, and get round the birds so as to cause them, if possible, to keep on my side of the stream. They lie well, and when they rise, I get a right and left at them, and

Mungo brings both the birds in good style. I know pretty well where the rest of the covey have gone; but with a wild dog you must never allow your attention to slumber for a moment, and I paid the penalty of doing so on this occasion. Leaving the turnips and keeping along the side of the brook I reach some rushy ground intersected by one or two ditches, into which dead thorns and gorse were stuffed by way of making a fence. I ought to have remembered that some of the birds at all events were nearly sure to be here, and that Mungo was equally sure to put them up, if allowed to run loose. But I never took him up, and just as I was getting through some thorns Mungo, who had winded the birds from afar, trotted down the fence and, before I was well over, put up the whole lot. They were near enough, but I was so vexed that I missed with both barrels, and as it was entirely my own fault I could only swear in the abstract.

The birds, however, had divided. The greater part went back; but four or five turned round in the direction in which my beat lay, and I hoped to meet with them again. I kept along the brook which now ran on the other side of the fence while on my side was a deep ditch full of long dry grass, and I went on for some distance without any luck; but presently Mungo, on whom I now kept a sharp eye, began feathering about uneasily and at last diving into the ditch sprung three beautiful young birds right in my face. This time I was cool enough, and killing my first bird as he went straight away had the satisfaction of wheeling round and dropping the second as he made off behind me. I like such a shot as that; the find, the rise, and the right and left fore and aft, are joys to think of after dinner, or perhaps in

the watches of the night. Still keeping along the brook and the rough ground by the side of it I pick up another odd bird, and then emerge into a lane which divides us from another lot of turnips. I have four brace on the game-stick now; it is one o'clock and a very hot day; shall we eat our sandwiches here? There is a shallow in the brook where the water trickles beautifully clear over the pebbles, and the dry warm grassy bank offers an inviting seat. But I decide to go on, work the next turnip-field and get up the hill again, before we take our rest; more especially as the boy, in accents of great alarm, signals the approach of a bull who having detached himself from the herd, is now slowly following us about two hundred yards off. The boy knows him for a misanthropic evil-minded beast, and expects nothing less than instant death should he be allowed to come up with us. I, too, have no liking for gentlemen of his breed, and think it decidedly better to put something between us which he cannot very readily get over before he comes any nearer. Clambering over a very high bank, with barbed wire running along the top, crossing the lane into the next field, and shutting a good strong gate behind us, we are in a position to look back upon him at our ease and mock him as he stands there with a baffled look, as much as to say that he has been taken a mean advantage of.

We beat out the turnips but only got a landrail and a rabbit, and then following the boy, who knows the way to a spring in the vicinity, we stretch ourselves under a hedge and enjoy the frugal meal which we feel we have fairly earned. The cup attached to my whiskey-flask is filled and emptied more than once, the cold clear spring water with about a third of the creature forming a delightful beverage.

The boy, being Welsh, is a teetotaller, and even were he not, consideration for his morals would induce me to refrain from tempting him, even were there no other reason, of which doubtless there might be several. How grateful was that hour of repose! Not a cloud is in the bright blue sky overhead; not a sound is to be heard, except perhaps the song of the robin from a neighbouring ash; not a breath of air stirs the branches of the trees. The "solemn stillness" of Gray's elegy is to be found sometimes at midday as well as in the evening, and never so perfectly as in September. From the top of this hill I can see, as I lie down, another one about a quarter of a mile off, where there is clearly a long stretch of turnips. I know that there were a lot of birds there last year, and after lunch resolve to make straight for it without beating any intervening ground.

I am not disappointed, though doomed to be greatly exasperated. I get round to the back of the turnips, so as to bring the birds my way, and had scarcely set foot in them when a large covey rose out of shot. I had again neglected to take up Mungo in time; off he went helter-skelter through the turnips, and before he came back had put up three more nice coveys of birds before my very eyes as I stood still perfectly helpless. It is needless to say that a catastrophe of this kind does not improve one's shooting. In the next hour I was rather unsteady, and though I found more birds in the turnips I missed several which I ought to have killed, and only bagged a brace. However, knowing the line the birds had taken, I was able to send a lot of them back again, when they spread themselves over the field as birds will do in these circumstances, and when, if you follow them up quickly before they have had

time to get together, you will have some shooting. I shook off the depression produced by my recent misfortunes, adjured the boy by all the English oaths I could make him understand not to let Mungo get away on any pretext whatsoever, and prepared for business. The turnips were half white and half swedes, and from half-past three to five I never left them. The partridges kept getting up in twos and threes, and though Mungo once broke his leash and plunging in among some birds just in front, while I was loading, lost me at least four or five easy shots, I got eleven birds out of that one field in spite of his vagaries.

This made ten brace and a half, and as it was my first day, and very hot, I was a little tired. Besides which I was obliged to take the boy's case into consideration, though he bore himself bravely under his double burden of birds and cartridges. So I proposed an adjournment to the nearest farmhouse to get some cold water, and refreshed by another draught of well-diluted whiskey and a little chat with the farmer, who did not decline the cup, I turned my steps homewards. My path led past another good field of turnips and potatoes; but I thought I would leave it for another day and merely walked down the potatoes as the nearest way home. Here I got one bird, which made up the eleven brace, and well satisfied I sauntered back towards the old grey gables looking out from their dark green cincture, through that delicious mellow sunshine only, I think, to be felt on a September afternoon, when the air is just beginning to cool, and the grass and the trees, the hedges and the turnips all look a deeper green than at any other hour of the day. Before I reach the house I pick up a couple of rabbits which Mungo finds for me in some

rough grass, and when I turn out my bag before my courteous hostess she is all smiles and compliments, —eleven brace of partridges, three rabbits, and a landrail.

This was an ideal day's sport. Shooting in a gale of wind, or a driving rain, is quite another affair, and I had two or three such experiences. But the fine weather came back again, and I had more such days as the first. I was requested not to shoot hares, but there were some wild pheasants about, and with the advent of October I had these to shoot as well. They lay in the turnips and among the gorse and briars which straggled alongside the fences. One day I drove two coveys of birds down towards a narrow green lane, only in fact a cart-track with a hedge and ditch on each side and a perfect thicket of furze and bramble running alongside of it for nearly a quarter of a mile. Both pheasants and partridges lay there, and though they would not always come out on my side of the hedge I got five pheasants and nine partridges out of that lane before I left it. Mungo enjoyed this part of his work immensely. I love to see a spaniel nosing a pheasant. You can tell pretty nearly by his action what game he is upon. He is more excited over a pheasant, perhaps because it takes longer to get him up; and it is a pretty sight to see an old cock forced upon the wing, and the dog watching his flight with breathless eagerness till he comes down with a thud at the report of the gun. When there are no trees a pheasant rising in this way is an easier shot than a rocketeer; but

where there are either trees, or any very tall bushes, hazel, holly or what not, you have to shoot smartly to stop him before he is out of sight. My best bag of partridges while I stayed at the old house was twelve brace on September 28th. I did not get more than a dozen pheasants in all, for it was not a good season for them down in those parts. Nineteen rabbits, three snipe, a landrail, and a golden plover with a hundred and seventeen partridges made up a total of a hundred and fifty-three head, representing twelve shooting days, of which, however, four or five were partially or wholly wet.

The day which I have described may practically stand for all the rest. The bag, of course, would vary according to the weather and the state of my nerves; but the ground I went over was always much the same in character, and need not be described twice. The early mornings brought me the same lively view of bird-life; afternoon, with few exceptions, the same sweet golden sunshine; evening, when bird and beast had retired to rest, the same absolute repose; and when the moon had risen, the same unearthly aspect of the old garden where to meet a ghost among its pale gnarled trunks and fantastic roots would have seemed the most natural thing in the world. Many a happy week have I spent in the old manor-house, and after leaving it have often wished, with the farmer returning from the Abbotsford Hunt, that I could go to sleep till September came round again.

T. E. KILBY.

DOLLS, THE GOLD-FINDER.

I.

It was Sunday at Friendly Point, and the hot glare of the Queensland midsummer sun came from the sea and from the sand along the margin of the sea, until the eyes were dazzled and the skin scorched. From the bush, which grew beyond the sand, there came the chirp and rattle of the cicadas, with now and again the piping note of a stray magpie, as the faint breeze that blew from seaward floated away among the gaunt white-barked gums and made the rank dry grass rustle faintly as it passed. Such a day it was that the clear depths of the sea, blue where the channels lay and green where the sandbanks formed, seemed to spread in cool delights that mocked those who would not plunge into them and revel in the refreshing sense of cold water lipping on their bare bodies. Such a day it was that every instinct of humanity went out to nature in revolt against the conventional, and against anything that could come between the softness of the sea-breeze and the burning heat of the skin. To lie unclad and free in every limb, with the soft breeze fanning the body and the cool clear water laving it, was the appropriate ideal of such weather to any save the residents at Friendly Point. To their minds the appropriate ideal lay in an entirely different direction.

Four of them, arrayed with unusual care, were down by the shore, sitting on a fallen log which was partly in the shade of a tree. Three of them were smoking; but the fourth

sat gaunt and upright as befitted a new arrival at the Point. He had only arrived the night before, and it was in his honour that his three companions wore other than trousers turned up to their knees and the loose unbuttoned shirt that was the ordinary costume of the locality. It was long since a new resident had come to the Point, for there were many stories about the place which had circulated in the township up the river across the bay, stories, indeed, which were not always to the credit either of the morality or the sobriety of the inhabitants. They had drawn an unenviable attention to the settlement, with the result that men were no longer anxious to find a haven of rest in it, and so, as the years wore on and fresh arrivals were unknown, the old settlers steadily diminished by natural decrease. Only three remained of the men who had made the locality famous in the days gone by, only Backus, Isters, and Snaky Dick; the rest had either drifted away out of sight and memory, or had silently yielded up the burden of life in the lonely hut or the sombre bush, and had been laid by their comrades' hands in unnamed graves, unmarked save for the mound of earth which the rainy seasons soon beat flat.

Snaky Dick, grown very fat and puffy, was responsible for introducing the new arrival. He had run against him in the town up the river and had, with the strange faculty which comes to men of a lonely life, recognised in the careworn, bald, and broken-spirited man, the

sprightly young soldier with whom he had been almost as a brother in the far off days, when the heat of the Australian sun was unknown to him, and life was only a jest. He had gone up to him and greeted him as Dolls, the nick-name by which he had been known in those days, and Dolls had stared at him, vacant-eyed and astonished, as he sought to recall when and where he had met this familiar stranger. His life had not given him the other man's memory, and so he could only grope in his mental darkness as a blind man will in new surroundings, hoping to stumble upon something that would seem familiar to him. Before he could find it, Snaky Dick unbosomed himself, and thereafter Dolls was enlightened and had his mind set at rest also, for he was at the lowest ebb of his fortunes, friendless and moneyless, a state which is, perhaps, the worst that humanity can know, and Snaky Dick, with his stories of Friendly Point, came to the care-worn castaway as a bearer of glad tidings.

Dolls poured into the ears of his old comrade the tale of his own misfortunes. There was little in it to blame the man for. Always his schemes and enterprises (he had been an ambitious man) had just missed success, until, as the years went by and the list of failures grew longer and longer, he became more reckless and tempted Fortune for looking askance at him. At last a time came when he had nothing, and then a further futility came upon him, the futility of believing that he had the brains whereby a great invention could be created and a great fortune built up.

At the time Snaky Dick met him he had received his seventh fall under that delusion, and it had been a fall than which it was impossible to go lower. Friendly Point, a place where rents and taxes were unknown, where

clothing cost practically nothing, and where the sea offered the wherewithal of sustenance whenever necessity compelled the expenditure of sufficient energy to win it, was to him a haven not to be despised. So it came about that he accompanied Snaky Dick back to the quaint, out-of-the-world settlement, and the Sunday afternoon after his arrival the three old-established settlers turned out to do him honour, clad in garments that they admitted were highly uncomfortable, but on which Snaky Dick had insisted in the presence of one who had a reputation to maintain as a capitalist, a man of business, and an inventor. He had joined them on the beach and sat, dignified and silent, while the others smoked and yarned, until one of them turned to him and said: "And you've had your little bit of trouble, too, Mister, as I understand?"

"Trouble? Ah, you'd say so if you knew everything. But there, what's life without trouble? It's the sauce of existence. Look at that sea, all smoothness and sunshine. What would it be if there were no storms and winds and waves? Dead dull monotony. Look at those sands, all golden and gleaming; what would they be if it were not for the clouds that come over the sun and make them look dull and dismal? Storms and winds and waves and clouds are Nature's parallels of our troubles. Life would be flat without them, flat, stale and unprofitable. Trouble's the sauce of life and the bringer of gladness,—if we only knew it."

"Well, for my part, I'm satisfied with rum," said Backus meditatively. "It takes a lot of beating in the way of sauce, does good honest colonial rum."

Isters looked round with a suddenly brightened face. "Maybe Snaky Dick explained to the new

chum the ways we used to have. I observed he had some fixtures with him in the boat when he came over."

Backus looked at Snaky Dick, but meeting with no responsive glance he turned again towards the new arrival. "There used to be a custom, not to say a habit, at the Point, Mister," he began.

"His name's Dolls," Snaky Dick interpolated.

"Well, as we're all mates here, Dolls let it be," Backus went on. "But as I was saying, there used to be a custom here, not to say a habit—"

"It wasn't our fault the habit didn't get regular," interrupted Isters; "but we're all on to begin practising again for it and if you've—"

"He don't drink," said Snaky Dick.

Backus and Isters looked first at one another, then at Dick, and lastly at Dolls. "'E don't wot?" asked the Cockney Backus.

Dolls had risen to his feet and stood stiff and silent for a moment. Then he said: "When there are calls upon my brain I do not hesitate to sacrifice everything to the demands of invention, and there are calls at present claiming me. Wherefore I must leave you, so as to meditate upon my great invention, an invention which will bring immortal fame to this obscure spot, and deathless fame to you who, in however humble a degree, are associated with me in the unravelling of the great mystery."

"There's no call for any mystery that I can see," Isters remarked stolidly.

"You are wrong," said Dolls sternly; "you are utterly and entirely wrong. There is much mystery, and it is the mystery I would solve." As he spoke he extended his right arm towards the sea. "Gold," he said in a deep solemn tone, "gold, by the million

tons! Who fears to speak of famine while that is there?" He stood, with his arm still stretched out, looking, with dreamy eyes, at the expanse of sparkling rippling colour in front of him. "There's gold in the sea," he went on, "gold by the ton in the sea. Anyone knows that, but anyone does not know how to get it out. There's a problem for you, my boy; there's a game worthy of your brains and intellect! Set to work on it,—think! You've plenty of time and there's plenty of sea, and no syndicate to cut you off at the end of the week. Think it out; thought conquers all things; it will wring the gold from the sea."

He was talking to himself, ignoring the presence of the others, and they, amused and lazy, let him ramble on without interruption. When he ceased speaking they still sat silent, the while he gazed with vacant eyes over the expanse of blue water to the narrow rim of darker blue on the horizon which told of the mountain range lying a hundred miles inland from the shore across the bay. They were almost startled when he turned his glance upon them suddenly and said, loudly and pompously: "It is as good as done. I have undertaken it, and what I undertake I achieve. This place shall have universal fame, for it is here I shall get gold out of sea-water. I am no braggart; within a month it shall be done."

Without more than a glance at the three men he walked away across the sand towards the hut of which he had formally taken possession.

II.

Ready to meet most men and to fraternise with them, the residents of Friendly Point experienced a hitherto unknown difficulty in coming to comradeship with the new arrival.

Clad in vestments of the Point community, and established in one of the huts left by a former dweller to go to ruin, Dolls had become one of the residents in name though not in fact. He had a curious habit of wandering up and down the sands just above the line of the tide, muttering to himself and gesticulating towards the sea so long as he was left alone; but as soon as anyone joined him he turned away and retired to his hut, whence he would not reappear for hours. At first his fellow-residents were inclined to regard this as merely a token of eccentricity inseparable from one who possessed the genius of invention; but after a week or so had passed, and Dolls maintained his mysterious attitude of isolation, the other men began to grow irritated.

Then their sentiments underwent a further change, and a certain uneasiness came over them as Dolls ceased to wander along the tide-mark by daylight, but developed nocturnal habits instead. In the night, and especially on moonlight nights, he was to be seen at all hours down on the sands by the sea, waving his arms towards the expanse of water and bending down as though offering it the most reverent obeisance. It was growing too mysterious for them, and definite action might have resulted but for Isters, who suggested that, as the inventor did not actually interfere with their rest, unless they went out of their way to watch him, it might be as well to leave matters as they were until something happened which was a direct interference with their comfort.

They had not long to wait before this something occurred. A few days later Dolls appeared again by daylight,—but not on the beach. Without a word of warning the occupant of each hut was startled by suddenly seeing at the door the figure of Dolls.

He did not speak, but just leaned forward as though about to enter. His eyes, wild and gleaming, glanced round the interior and over the occupant without apparently seeing him, and then without a word or a sign, the hands were removed from the doorposts, the body swung back, and Dolls disappeared.

The effect upon each of the three men was pronounced, and the remainder of the day was not sufficient time for them to discuss it adequately. When the sun went down they gathered together in the hut of Backus and debated whether it was not compulsory upon them to do what had never yet been done at the Point, namely, to tell a resident that he would have to go. "But supposing he won't go, what then?" Snaky Dick asked; and the question led to a further stretch of debate, until the sun had been below the horizon for hours and, with the point still unsolved, the men began to grow sleepy.

They were suddenly and effectually re-awakened, for from the direction of Dolls's hut there came a series of most unearthly yells and screeches that their ears had ever heard.

With one accord they rushed to the door. It was a moonless night and they could see the light from Dolls's fire streaming through the open door and window of the hut, while a bright glow was visible over the wide square chimney. The melancholy noise was unabated.

"He's on fire, he's burning himself! Come on, lads," Isters exclaimed and led the way to the door of Dolls's hut.

The noise ceased as suddenly as it began, and as they reached the hut they peered through the open doorway expecting to see some horrible sight within. Instead, they saw the figure of Dolls sitting on an empty case with his back to them and his face to a

great roaring fire over which hung a smoke-begrimed billy-can.

"Here, what's this row?" Isters exclaimed as, followed by the other two, he entered the hut.

Dolls looked round. "Row," he said, "row? That's no row; that's the imprecation. It was me—singing."

Before anyone else could speak he sprang to his feet, and, seizing the billy-can, lifted it from the fire and held it out towards them. "There, see!" he cried.

They looked and saw a foaming bubbling liquid.

"Now watch," he cried, and hastily raking the blazing wood of the fire apart so as to form a hollow depression in the centre, he poured the contents of the can into it. A cloud of steam ascended with a loud hissing; the flames died away, leaving the pile of burning wood in a glowing heap of red, and through the air there spread an odour so terrible and so pungent that the three visitors with one bound made for the door, and never stopped till they had got some distance from the hut, inside of which, as they turned, by the dull glow shed by the embers of the fire, they could see Dolls capering round and round.

"There's been rum 'uns at the Point before," Isters exclaimed; "there's been rum 'uns and wrong 'uns, but this is the first time we've harboured a real full-blooded loonie. Snaky, my boy, if you've many more mates like this one you'd better form a new camp to ask them to; Friendly Point can't stand it."

"It's chemistry," Snaky Dick replied; "it's an experiment. He'll do it all right. Don't you be afraid. Dolls is a clever chap at that work."

"Then we'll leave him at it and come and look for him in the morning," Isters said. "I wouldn't face that smell again for a forty gallon keg."

"I don't know. It's my view he's struck it, and if we come back in an hour or so, we'll see something," Snaky Dick urged.

He was supported by Backus, whose Cockney curiosity was more powerful than his want of sleep, and Isters had perforce to yield or go off by himself and lose any entertainment there might be later.

For an hour or so the men sat in the hut of Backus, smoking and talking, listening the while for any fresh token of activity on the part of Dolls. But no sound came from the direction of his hut, although the glow of his fire still streamed out into the night. At length curiosity mastered each of the three watchers and together they went to learn what was taking place.

As they approached the hut they saw, as on the previous occasion, the figure of Dolls outlined against the red gleam of the fire, which also showed where the billy-can stood on the rude hearth-stone. Dolls was gazing intently at the fire, so intently that he never moved as the men entered his hut and stood beside him. They followed the direction of his glance, and saw that a hole had been scraped in the embers down to the hearth, in the centre of which there was a large button of what appeared to be semi-molten metal.

"What, Dolls, how goes it?" Snaky Dick asked briskly as the man sat still and silent.

The voice seemed to awaken him, for he slowly turned his head and looked his questioner in the face, revealing his own haggard features and staring eyes to the scrutiny of the others.

"There!" he said, in a deep theatrical tone. "There!" and he pointed to the button of metal. "That, sir, is pure unalloyed gold, and I got it from a canful of sea-water. Look at it. There is an ounce of gold! An

ounce for a canful of water! How many canfuls of water are there in the ocean? Tell me that, and I will tell you how many ounces of gold I will produce from it. There is the ocean outside. Go and fetch it, and I will turn it into gold. Go; I am waiting for the ocean."

"That's not gold, old sky-rocket; that's a bit of lead-sinker off a schnapper-line," Isters exclaimed with a loud laugh.

"The folly of fools is immeasurable, as immeasurable as my millions of tons of gold which I shall take from the ocean," Dolls replied, with a dignity of tone and manner that checked the hilarity of Isters and subdued the other two to a state of wondering curiosity. "Watch and you shall see," he added, as he scraped one side of the ring of embers away and through the opening gently pushed the button of metal. Then he carefully picked it up with the aid of a couple of sticks and dropped it into a pannikin which stood beside him more than half full of a clear liquid. The liquid hissed and bubbled and a little steam rose up; as soon as that ceased Dolls put in his finger and thumb and drew out the button which shone bright and yellow in the firelight.

"To-morrow you shall take it to town," he said to Backus. "Take it to an address I will give you and bring back the answer whether it is gold or not. Now leave me, for I would meditate."

III.

There was rejoicing at the Point when Backus returned from town and for many a night and day afterwards, rejoicing of the kind that had won the place its reputation years before. Dolls was the host by common consent, and the news of the

festivities travelled to outlying fishing-stations where men lived away from all others of their colour, but yet heard (though Heaven alone knows how) that the Point had put on its ancient manners again and so become a place of attraction for them. The story of the great discovery was told and retold, not always coherently perhaps, but always with plenty of enthusiasm; and always was the discoverer toasted deeply and loyally.

Buoyed up by the flattery of those who were his guests, his vanity soothed by the terms of the letter Backus had brought to him from the town, and his confidence in himself re-established by the tangible evidence of success in this, his last, effort, Dolls returned to his hut and his labour, with brief interludes, during which he visited the hut where festivity reigned and joined in the wild untutored frolic that went on there.

Two boys, sons of one of the men who had come in from an outlying fishing-camp, paid him great attention at that period. They were mystified at his long silent vigils over the glowing pile of wood-ashes in his hut, and were curious to learn why he was always boiling sea-water in the billy-can, and carefully guarding the salt that was left when all the water had boiled away. Unknown to him they watched him through a chink in the wall of the hut for hours together, and, failing to obtain any satisfaction by that means, they became emboldened, after watching the festivities in the other hut, to pester him with questions. Their curiosity gratified him, and he told them not only all about the great discovery but about many other things as well; and always did they listen with interest. But there was one effect of his words upon them which he did not anticipate. From being curious the stories he told them made

them become inquisitive, and they fretted for an opportunity when they too might assist in the working of the great discovery. Hence they paid him close attention and followed him from one hut to the other, always on the look-out for opportunity and always keeping their own counsel.

At length their perseverance was rewarded, and they slipped away to his hut secure for a thorough investigation.

The first thing that attracted their attention was the deep hole in the centre of the heap of wood-ashes in the fireplace, and they fell into a dispute at once as to the depth of it. To prove his contention the younger boy picked up a plumb of lead which, with its string attached, formed the sinker of the fishing-lines Dolls had never used. He lowered the lead down the hole to convince his brother of his error, when both boys were amazed to see the string burst into flames. They looked at one another for a moment, then turned and ran, and only when at a very safe distance did they explain to one another that the ashes were still hot and had set fire to the string. But simple as their explanation made it appear, the burning of the string satisfied them for the time being to leave the great discovery alone.

It was many hours after when Dolls, unsteady on his feet and cloudy in his mind, came back to his post by the ash-heap. Before leaving he had placed in the hollow a quantity of the compounds from which he believed the gold had come on the former occasion, and dimly in his mind he realised that the transmutation ought by this time to have taken place. As steadily as he could he raked away the ashes from the top of the heap, smoothing it over until the piece of hoop-iron he was using struck something solid. The jar of the iron,

slight as it was, sent the man's heart into his throat, for it told him that again the experiment had succeeded and demonstrated that he had indeed solved the great problem.

More vigorously he raked, and more excited did he become, as the ashes were cleared away from the centre until there was slowly revealed a massive cake of yellowish metal glistening with iridescent hues. The sight was too much for the self-control of Dolls and he leaped to his feet and ran, shouting, to his late companions in conviviality.

Besides warning them of his approach his shouts reached the ears of the two boys and aroused in them a fear which effectually put the seal of secrecy on their escapade. But no such reserve governed the others who heard first the shouts and then the story of Dolls. Together they went to the hut where the treasure lay, and there, with much ceremony, some excitement, and not a little confusion, the cake of metal was taken from its resting-place and passed around, warm and shining, from one to the other. There was no doubting the matter now; the cake was gold of the purest quality, every one of the men was prepared to swear,—and did. Dolls was a genius of the proudest and most distinguished character, and had thoroughly vindicated his promise to make Friendly Point a place of world-wide fame. The praise that was showered upon him, the natural elation which came to him at his continued success, and the contrast between the dazzling future that lay before him and the grim failure of his past, all combined to make Dolls come perilously near to losing his head. As it was he puffed himself up with pomposity almost to the point of bursting. He gave orders to the men who so recently saved him from starvation, and strutted about

the hut as though it was a king's palace.

Backus and Isters were ordered to start at once for the town to carry the cake of metal to the man they had seen on their former visit. They were to leave it with him and tell him that Dolls was coming in person to see him. Then they were to obtain from him what money was necessary to purchase the wherewithal to properly celebrate at the Point the demonstration of the great discovery.

No sooner were the orders given than they were obeyed, for Dolls was fast becoming a creature of almost superhuman power in the eyes of the ignorant and not too sober men around him. When he said that he would follow with the morning, one of the men from the fishing-camp at once offered his boat, and went away to make it ready. The remainder stayed with Dolls and kept up the celebration of the discovery as well as the stores would permit, until the sun rose and it was time for him to start for his journey across the bay and up the river to the township.

It was a clear morning, with a light breeze just strong enough to move the boat along, so that by the time the township was reached, Backus and Isters were making ready to leave on their return journey. They reported that they had carried out all the instructions they had received, and added that the gentleman was waiting to greet and honour the great discoverer. Dolls, who had arrayed himself in his best, stepped ashore and barely heeded the fisherman's remarks that he would return with Backus and Isters, and leave the boat for Dolls to sail down again if he came back to the Point.

Dolls walked briskly to the office of the man who, as the head of the syndicate that had formerly employed him, had left him in the hopeless

state that Snaky Dick had found him in. He smiled to himself as he approached the place. "A thousand millions is what I shall ask," he said to himself as he opened the door and, without ceremony, walked into the private office. At the table, looking extremely ill-pleased, sat the financier.

"I sent you," Dolls began in a lordly tone.

"Lead! Coloured lead! It is a swindle," interrupted the other savagely. "Already I have lost thirty pounds, and unless you refund that at once I give you in charge."

Dolls, taken aback, sunk into the nearest chair and stared at the man vacantly.

"It is a trick, a swindle," cried the other, his temper rising now that he had once begun to speak.

"That's a lie," Dolls retorted. "You have had my gold and now want to thief it! But what of that? You cannot steal my secret, and I can get tons more gold, tons and tons, from the ocean."

"It's lead, I tell you," cried the other. "There, what's that?" he asked, as he held up the cake of yellowish metal with the iridescent hues upon it before Dolls's eyes.

"That?" Dolls said suavely. "That is a cake of gold procured by means of my great secret knowledge from the—"

He stopped abruptly, for the man had turned the cake round and now held towards him a side whence the outer part had been cut away, revealing what not even the enthusiastic Dolls could fail to recognise as fresh-cut lead.

The financier flung it heavily on the table in front of him, and Dolls, his mind a confused blur, picked it up and looked at it.

There could be no mistake; the cake was identical with the cake he

had taken from the ashes in all but the side from whence the outer part had been scraped or cut, and the poor muddled brain of Dolls failed to develop even a suspicion that he had been tricked. The blow was too sudden and too swift, and under it the great inventor and discoverer sat forlorn and dismayed.

"It's a bare-faced swindle," the financier went on. "You send me up a small piece of gold, just about as much as would make half-a-sovereign, with a message that it was a proof of your success. I was fool enough to believe you, and at once you send me up a cake of lead coloured to look like gold. Now then, either you refund every penny you and your friends have had from me, or I'll call in the police."

"It is not true, it is not true," Dolls said wearily. "It was gold I sent. I got it the same as the other; it is all part of the system. The discovery cannot be wrong. It must be the metal. Perhaps it had not had time to change right into gold and only got as far as lead. Ah," he went on in a brighter tone, "that's it! I didn't give it time enough. I'll take it back and treat it again. The discovery *cannot* be wrong. This shall be gold all through next time you see it."

He rose from his seat and took up his hat.

"Not so fast," his companion said sharply; "you don't play the confidence trick on me. You have to make this square before you leave the room."

"But I must return to my laboratory to complete my work; my apparatus is there."

"That may be, but before you leave this room you'll make things square with me."

"How can I?" Dolls asked. "What am I to do more than I have done?"

"I want proof before I trust you any more. Give me proof that you are acting squarely, or in come the police and out you go to gaol."

"How can I?" repeated the disconcerted Dolls. "How can I?"

"By writing out the secret of your process and leaving it with me," was the reply.

Dolls stared blankly at the financier for a few moments, and then blurted out a curt refusal.

"You know the alternative?" was the answer.

"Not for millions, not for untold millions would I part with the secret," Dolls exclaimed.

"Now see here, you're a reasonable man," the financier said quietly. "You'll see the force of this. If I hand you over to the police they'll lock you up. After you're safe under lock and key I start for Friendly Point. Your friends know me, and I shall have no difficulty in finding where you worked out your experiments. You did not clean up before you came away, and I dare say you left enough behind to show a smart man how you did the trick. So while you are spending your days in gaol I am learning all about the secret, which will then be mine, *mine* only, and don't you forget it."

Dolls gasped. "It would be cold-blooded scoundrelism," he exclaimed.

The financier held up a warning hand. "No bad language," he said sternly; "we discuss this matter on business principles. You give me the secret or I take it. Which is it to be? One or the other; they are both the same to me, so long as I have what I want."

Dolls, helpless to break from the toils in which he was caught, yielded without further struggle and wrote down the secret of his discovery. The financier was not a scientific man, and the terms that

Dolls used in the document were as meaningless to him as they were to the expert to whom he referred the document next day; but by that time many things had happened.

As soon as the discovery had been committed to paper (even the "imprecation" being included) Dolls made good his escape and, returning to the landing-stage, went on board the boat the fisherman had left there. He was not clever at handling a sailing-boat but knew enough to enable him to get down as far as the mouth of the river in safety, though at a considerable cost in time. But the hours did not drag for him. His mind was too full of his discovery, and the manner in which the secret of it had been wrung from him, for the mere passage of time to concern him.

Night came on as he was passing down the river, but the moon was up as soon as the last glow of the sunset died from the west, and there was light enough for Dolls to distinguish the dangers to navigation while he was in the stream. Bitterness was in his heart, bitterness and sorrow, for it was real to the man that he had given away the great secret of his discovery, the secret for which he had been going to ask and obtain countless millions. He believed that what he had written was true and comprehensible; and he believed, also, that by the following day it would be published broadcast, and that wherever the ocean laved the earth men would be at work wresting gold from the water, until there was so much of the yellow metal in the world that all mankind would turn from it in disgust.

In the gloom of his sorrow a thought flashed with the brilliance of a lightning-stroke. If so much gold was made that it became dross, another metal would take the place of

gold, another metal that was rare and scarce; and his hand sought the cake of coloured lead in his pocket. In the midst of his desolation triumph came to him. They might publish his secret, they might take the millions of tons of gold from the sea; but he would keep his other secret, the secret how to make this rare and as yet unknown metal.

The boat had reached the mouth of the river and before him stretched the wide expanse of the bay. On the far side there lay the islands at the head of one of which was Friendly Point, where high revel was now being kept in honour of his discovery. Beyond that island lay the wide Pacific Ocean, heaving and rolling as it sought to sweep into the bay through the treacherous channels that divided the islands from one another. Dolls had heard of those channels, where the currents ran like mill-streams, and where sharks lurked in the deep holes, and stinging-rays in the shallows. They were fatal even to skilled boatmen, and Dolls, for a moment, wondered if he could find his way to the Point across the expanse of sea before him without being drawn into one of these death-traps. But it was only for a moment. The next, his astuteness in turning the tables on his adversary, and rescuing the greatest secret of all from the spoilers, overcame every other sense; and, calculating the wealth that would yet be his, Dolls steered straight for the mighty rollers where they boomed and thundered on the ocean-side of the channels.

The noise came to him as the cold grey streak of dawn showed on the eastern horizon. The noise was straight ahead of him, just where there appeared a line of leaping, springing mountains of foam. A swift glance to the right and the left showed him where the banks of the

channel were flying past him, and Dolls stood up as the white foam of a broken billow swarmed round the bows of the boat and rose up over the side. With the luck of the fool he pushed the helm over and brought the boat broadside on to the current but with her nose pointing to the nearest shore, and the breeze caught the sails full and forced her towards the land. Only twenty yards lay between him and safety, but midway over that distance a narrow sandbank cut the channel in two. The boat grounded on it and heeled over away from the current and the breeze, but towards the rushing fury of the breakers.

Dolls, seeking to hold his balance, saw a line of white foam leaping and swinging over the deeper blue beneath. Hissing, it swept up to the boat and rose over the side that was forced down by the current to meet it. The boat heeled further over under the

weight of the water and Dolls was flung, as a straw on the wind, into the seething, foaming, boiling rage of the breaking roller. It was to him as though the ocean he had threatened with his skill had come to test his strength of conquest, and in the midst of the swirling fury that tossed him to and fro, now up, now down, Dolls roused himself to action. Blending with the roar of the ocean and the hiss of the spray the discordant notes of his "imprecation" struggled for a moment to live. Then the rush of might and anger flooded above his head, and the waves and currents gambolled with a nerveless, lifeless thing, until, hours afterwards, they grew tired of the sport and flung it, as though in derision and contempt, at the foot of a sun-dried tussock of withered sea-quenched grass.

Dolls had solved the golden secret of the ocean.

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Do come here for Christmas," wrote Bella to Bill from Haylands about the middle of December. "You must come, if it is only for a week. It is nonsense for Polly to say she can't spare you; she simply must. Theresa thinks that it will do you good. She won't believe what Polly says about the way in which you have taken this breaking off with Gilchrist; she thinks you must be upset, and that to come here might do you good. I enclose a postal order for six shillings for the fare. Polly is sure to say you can't afford it; Theresa and I can, and 'we want you to come.'"

And in spite of Polly's protestations and objections Bill went. Polly could not go; she had one lodger now and could not shut the house up. But seeing that he was only one, and one who did not require much waiting on, and seeing also that Bella and Theresa had paid Bill's fare, there was no reason why she should not go. So Bill went to Wrugglesby, and Bella and Theresa, who had driven from Ashelton for some shopping, met her and brought her home.

Bella was glad Bill was coming, although, she reflected, if the girl was really as disturbed as Theresa imagined about her broken engagement she would be but poor company and

not much relief from the dulness of Haylands. For some reason or other it had been dull there that autumn, at least on the days when Jack did not come. Theresa, who had always been quiet, was more quiet than ever now; she seemed to have aged during the past months, or else Bella, used to associating with the livelier if more unprincipled Polly, thought so. "Marriage does alter people," thought Bella, and fell to speculating about herself and Jack. There really was very little to think about at Haylands, very little to talk about in all Ashelton. Even Miss Minchin, at the fortnightly working-parties, had nothing fresh to say, and so went untiringly over the nine days' wonder of Gilchrist Harborough's claim to Wood Hall.

Miss Minchin might not be tired of that, but Bella was, and by the beginning of December she had heard quite enough of that and most other subjects of Ashelton conversation. But about that time she and Theresa found a fresh subject in the letter Bill wrote to them after Gilchrist's visit to London. She wrote by one post, and by the next Polly wrote a good two ounces of lamentation, indignation, and abuse, the last both of Theresa and her "ridiculous secrecy," and also, in a far larger degree, of Bill and her obstinacy. Theresa was much perplexed; neither she nor

Bella could understand how it had come about; there was no explanation, except that Bill had availed herself of their permission to change her mind, and that somehow seemed unlikely. Bella was inclined to blame Gilchrist, and cited several instances when his devotion had fallen short of Jack's. Theresa, on the other hand, was for putting the change down to girlish caprice. She made a point of talking to Gilchrist on the subject, but without enlightening herself to any great extent. "Of course I could not cross-question him," she wrote to Polly, and was naturally not aware of that lady's wrathful exclamation,—*"I know I could then!"*

Although Theresa did not hear this, or any other of Polly's remarks, she could guess their nature, and her invitation to Bill was given partly with a view of saving the girl from the ceaseless bombardment of the elder cousin's wrath. As it happened, however, Polly was comparatively merciful in her indignation; she knew when words were a waste of breath, and understood with some precision when she could, and when she could not, move her partner. Consequently Bill was let off easily, and for that, or for some other reason, she did not seem at all unhappy when she stepped out on the platform at Wrugglesby station. The sisters, who met her, recognised the fact at once, and Bella at least was glad of it as she helped to carry Polly's hat-box to the pony-carriage. Bill talked a good deal on the homeward way seeming anything but depressed. Once when they were clear of the town she looked round and said softly: *"How beautiful it is! How very, very beautiful it is out here!"*

Bella thought the girl must be expressing her delight at leaving London and all her troubles behind her. She could see no beauty in the

landscape,—bare fields spread wide beneath the winter sky; gaunt, black-limbed elms and leafless hedgerows where the twilight crept mysteriously; a pale flare of sunset breaking through the ashen clouds to make the level land luminous and show near objects with a wonderful distinctness; stacks and barns and low-roofed cottages whence the smoke in thin spirals went straightly up into the evening air.

Robert came out to meet the pony-carriage with quite a cheerful smile of welcome.

"Here, brother-in-law Laziness," Bill said, filling his arms with Theresa's parcels; *"take some more, you can have these. I've got the sugar, T."*

And they went in-doors, Robert's setter slobbering over Bill,—she never had a dress that could be hurt by a dog's caress—and sheepishly following them into the forbidden precincts of the house.

"You are jolly cold, I expect," Robert said as he poked the fire into a blaze. *"Get your boots off and warm your feet. Where are your slippers? In this thing? Is this the key tied on outside?"*

Bill said it was; in her opinion to tie its key to the handle of an article was a sure way of having the key when you wanted it. Robert unfastened the box and rummaged over the contents with clumsy hands till he found the shoes; afterwards he put the things back anyhow, so that the box had to be carried up-stairs with the lid open.

How they talked that evening! Bella and Robert, even Theresa as well as Bill. Bill wanted to know everything, about the horses and dogs, the cows and pigs; what that stack had yielded when it was threshed, how the potatoes were keeping, why the long meadow was ploughed. She

wanted to know all about everybody in the place, how they were and what new clothes they had; she wanted to know when Jack came last and when he was coming next, what quantity of butter Theresa was getting now, and the pattern of the lace Bella had bought for her petticoats.

Somehow or other the common-places of life, the veriest trivialities assumed a vivid interest with Bill; the life which had seemed rather dull in the living became full of humour and incident when told to her. Her own life in London, when she told them about it, seemed almost fascinating. Bella found herself wishing that she had insisted on joining the lodging venture; she did not realise that the life, like the flat wintry landscape, required to be looked at through the lens of a particular kind of mind to assume the aspect it did for Bill.

One could not help being conscious of Bill's presence in the house. By the next afternoon Theresa was beginning to be aware of the difference she made. Bill had been in the attic that morning and looked over the nuts and apples that she herself had put there; she had brought down the rotten ones and brought down also the rose-leaves, put away to dry and forgotten. She had been round the barns and stables and out into the frozen garden, round the orchard to look for broken branches and dead wood for burning, into the icy dairy to help Jessie and hear about her love-affairs.

"It's like openin' the winders on a summer mornin'," Jessie said, when just before dinner Bill passed the kitchen-door with some Christmas roses she had found in a sheltered corner of the garden. She had gone to the pantry to arrange them in a glass, singing as she did so. Strangely enough she had not sung or whistled since that September morning at

Bymouth when she mimicked the birds while Kit Harborough wrung out her wet bathing-dress. But she did not know this, neither did Jessie, though she heard the singing appreciatively now. Still, it was not that which caused her remark when Bill, now quiet, passed the kitchen-door.

"It do freshen the house up wonderful to have you here again, miss; it's for all the world like openin' the winders on a sunny mornin'."

But Bill scarcely understood the allusion any more than Theresa did the fact. Theresa certainly did not understand; she was glad to have the girl back again, but felt that she was more incomprehensible than ever. Her whole attitude towards Gilchrist and the broken engagement was extraordinary to Theresa. She questioned Bill of course, and learned practically nothing, though her questions were answered freely enough. Bill was glad when the questioning was over; she was very tired of the subject and she wanted to hear about Bella's *trousseau*; also she wanted to go and see Mr. Dane.

Mr. Dane knew nothing about the engagement; there was no reason now why Bill should tell him, yet that afternoon, as she knelt on his hearthrug in the twilight, she suddenly determined to do so and to ask his opinion on her own course of action. It was after one of those pleasant, companionable silences which often fell between them that she approached the subject, entirely without introduction, as was her way. "Monseigneur," she said abruptly, "do you think it is ever right to break a promise,—a promise to marry someone, I mean?"

"To marry someone?" Mr. Dane repeated, and though his tone was only surprised there was a gravity in his manner as if he feared trouble

in the near future. "Yes," he said after a moment's consideration, "in some circumstances I do think it right to break such a promise."

"What circumstances?"

"If the person giving the promise finds out afterwards that he or she does not love the one to whom it is given."

"If one of the two finds that out?" Bill said in surprise. "You do not really think that is enough? You would not break a promise for that, you would not think it honourable; it would not be either—neither honourable nor right."

"It would not be right for some people," Mr. Dane admitted; "but for others—" he broke off abruptly, and after a pause turned to her with an almost terrible earnestness. "Child," he said, "do not think I am trifling with right and wrong; indeed I am not. Yet still I say that, though it might not be honourable for some to break such a promise, for you it would not be a question of honour or dishonour but of absolute necessity."

"I did not think so."

"You?" he exclaimed with an excitement which astonished her; "you did not think so?"

"No," she said, "I did not. I promised to marry Gilchrist Harbrough, but I did not love him."

"Then, in God's name, do not marry him! You don't know what you are doing. Do you think it worse to break your promise and dishonour your word, or to break a man's heart and dishonour him, yourself, and God's law, all that is most holy and most binding on earth?"

And then Bill realised what she had done, and how her words had wounded her friend. Had he not married a woman who did not love? Had he not suffered to the full the

uttermost bitterness of which he spoke? As she realised how she had reopened the tragedy of his life the girl was struck dumb with remorse, too grieved for the moment to think of explaining the circumstances of her own affairs.

But Mr. Dane did not know the reason of her silence, and he went on, his face drawn and stern. "You do not know your own history nor the danger which may threaten you. I do; and knowing, I say you must not, cannot marry a man you do not truly love. It is a mockery to pray 'lead us not into temptation' and then to put yourself in temptation's way. There is a passion which is stronger than you; it may sleep now but it will not always sleep, believe me, it will not always sleep. Listen now: first concerning your mother. You did not know her, neither did I, but you yourself told me she married in defiance of her parents; she loved the man and counted them well lost for him. And he,—he loved her, bewitched her, desired her,—she had no will but to go,—I know how it was done."

"You knew my father!"

"No, I knew his father. I saw the spell at work; I know the will of those Alardys and the power of their love; I have good reason to know. Your grandmother, the first Wilhelmina, I knew her too. She was another man's wife; she married him though she did not love him; she thought it was safe; she did not know—then came this other—"

He stopped abruptly. He was pacing the far side of the room with the restlessness almost of a young man; he stood in the shadow now, but she sat regarding him wide-eyed, something almost of horror in her face. That he should tear open these old wounds for her, his wife's grandchild, Wilhelmina's grandchild!

Wilhelmina! Yes, she knew now, the links in the chain were joined and she knew, although she murmured, — “My grandmother, Wilhelmina Corby?”

“Yes,” he said, and then he came into the firelight and his face was very pitiful. “Child, child,” he said sadly, “there are passions of which you know nothing; pray God you never may!”

The girl’s eyes suddenly filled with tears: “Do you not hate me?” she whispered.

But he did not hate her. The blessed years which had taught him not to hate, taught him to be merciful as well as just. “No, Princess Puck,” he said smiling gently, “I do not think I hate you.”

She crept dog-like to his side of the fire. “Shall I tell you something,” he said, reaching a hand down to touch her hair, “something which I do not count the least of my blessings this year?—God’s goodness in sending to me, whom He has denied wife or child, a little brown elf for a grand-daughter.”

Bill could not speak. She only mutely pressed against his chair, and for a long time they sat silent while he softly stroked her hair and the ashes fell quietly on the hearth. At last the old man spoke again; he had been thinking of the girl’s half-made confidence and it troubled him greatly. “This promise of which you spoke,” he said,—“is it to be kept or broken?”

Bill started like one awakening. “Broken,” she said, “I have broken it;” and she told him the whole story, always, of course, excepting that which was said, or rather was not said, when she and Kit Harborough met under the beeches on a day when a dream proved to be a dream no longer. But perhaps Mr. Dane discovered a little of that

for himself, for when he said good-bye to her that night he realised that his Princess Puck was a child no more.

CHAPTER XXXII.

It was towards the end of January that Bella came to town to finish buying her *trousseau*. A *trousseau* is a really momentous affair, and Bella, feeling that the shops at Wrugglesby were not equal to the occasion, came to Bayswater, where Polly gave her limitless advice and all the help in her power. Polly really enjoyed Bella’s visit, and Bill, who knew Polly’s weakness, did all the housework so that the elder cousin should be free to go shopping or help with the needlework according as the opportunity offered. During the time Bella was in London it seemed to Bill that they thought of, talked of, and considered very little beyond clothes, except perhaps once or twice in the evenings when Bella told them a little about Ashelton. Such conversations did not interest Polly, but as Bill liked them Bella talked to her. Once indeed Polly showed some interest, when Bella spoke of the change in Theresa and Robert.

“They both have altered a good deal,” she concluded, — “especially Robert. You saw him at Christmas, Bill; don’t you think he is changing?”

“Not changing exactly,” Bill said, “he is,—I think he is developing, growing to what you would expect. Some kinds of people are bound to grow in particular kinds of ways; they can hardly help themselves.”

“I don’t like Robert’s kind of way then. I think he has changed a good deal, and for the worse; so would you if you had stayed at Haylands as long as I have.”

Bill did not explain that what

Bella called "a change for the worse" and she "a natural growing" were one and the same thing; she did not say anything about it, though she felt a good deal, and knew that she could not help Theresa now any more than she could have helped her last spring.

Bella had gone on to speak of the change in Theresa and of the quiet of Haylands. "Hardly a soul comes there now," she said; "Theresa keeps them all at arm's length. I expect that is why Miss Minchin and Mrs. Jackson and the rest of them never come now. Of course Gilchrist Harbour would not come."

Polly heaved a deep sigh. "I expect Bill's breaking with Gilchrist troubled Theresa a good deal," she said.

But Bella laughed at such an idea, and afterwards went on to speak of Gilchrist and the lawsuit. "He has so little spare time just now," she said, "that I don't believe he would go to see anyone except on business. Jack sees him sometimes, and that is how I get to hear about him and his case. He is rather disgusted with it just now, Jack says, abuses the lawyers, and professes a great contempt for the slowness of the law."

Bill opened her eyes. "Why," she said, "he has only just begun! It will be two years before it is over. What did he expect?"

"How do you know?" demanded Polly.

"I was told," Bill answered, and Bella saved her further explanation by remarking: "That is what Mr. Stevens says; he told Jack so, and Jack told Gilchrist."

"What did he say?" Bill inquired.

"Oh, that he did not see how they were going to make the time out, but he supposed they would do it somehow. Jack said he seemed disgusted with everything that day, and vowed he would not mind selling his chances for a good sum down."

"Did he say that?" Bill asked quickly. "He told Jack that! But he couldn't do it, he couldn't sell his chances; they would be no good to anyone else."

"He could sell them to the other side," Bella said with the pride of recently acquired knowledge. "Jack told me that if the Harboroughs were rich they would probably by the autumn, if his claim seemed pretty good, try to compromise,—pay him to withdraw, you know. But then they are not rich; they have no spare money at all, and Jack says he does not think they could raise any. It seems rather a pity, for Jack says he believes Gilchrist would agree to a reasonable arrangement; he does not care a bit about Wood Hall now and only wants to go back to Australia."

"We all know why that is," Polly said with pious conviction. "Bill has only herself to thank if he does leave England like that."

"I don't suppose it would make any difference to Bill if he did go," Bella retorted; "and she certainly has nothing to do with his wanting to go. Jack says he is disgusted with people in general, with the lawyers and the other claimant much more than with Bill."

"Poor Gilchrist!" Polly said with commiseration, and continued to look in a meaning manner at Bill, who, however, was far too absorbed in the thoughts suggested to her by Bella's words to heed her.

Long that night she lay thinking of these new ideas, her brain full of conflicting thoughts, impossible plans, crazy fancies. Money, money,—she had never felt the want of it before, never, for all her poverty, felt any desire to be rich. She had always been poor and she had never minded; she had never been tempted by girlish superfluities, had never cared for ribbons and laces and nice food. But

now,—now she wanted money desperately, not a few shillings, or a few pounds as Polly, who did mind being poor, wanted it; but money in the big sense of the word, in the sense in which Polly never wanted it, in which she herself had hardly contemplated it before. Not that it mattered whether she wanted much or little, shillings or pounds or hundreds of pounds; one seemed about as attainable as the other.

It was always part of Bill's work to get up and clean the boots and light the fires before breakfast; it was no very great effort to her, and seemed moreover to fall naturally to her share. On the morning after she had lain so long thinking over the problem of ways and means, she got up as usual, cleaned the lodgers' boots, lighted the fires, washed her hands, and then, taking a candle from the kitchen-dresser, climbed on the back of a chair that stood against the wall. Moving an almanack hanging high above it, a hole became visible from which she drew out, wrapped in paper, Peter Harborough's shoe-buckles. For a long time she stood looking at them. Once she rubbed them on the corner of her apron; once she held them close to the candle so that the brilliant, refracted light flashed back from the gems and scattered sparks of white fire over her face and hands. She could not tell what they were worth, perhaps a hundred pounds, perhaps two hundred,—Polly had said two; diamonds were very valuable she knew, but how valuable she could not tell. At last she wrapped the buckles up again, put them back in their hiding-place and went about her work with a thoughtful face.

She wore a thoughtful face all that day, for she was revolving a plan in her mind. In the afternoon she went to her bedroom and there opened the

little oak box which used to stand in the spare room at Langford House. She had only been to it once since last winter, but now she turned over its contents carefully. She was not much the wiser for her examination; the only papers old enough to interest her conveyed little to her mind, beyond the indisputable fact that the name Corby appeared in them. However, her failure to find anything important in the little chest did not alter her plans, and in the evening, when the elder cousins were at leisure, she spoke to Polly about them. Bella and Polly had been busy with the *trousseau* all day, but by the evening they were able to listen to Bill when she informed them that she was going to Wrugglesby the next day.

"To Wrugglesby!" Bella exclaimed. "What on earth are you going there for?"

But this Bill was not prepared to say; she expected to be asked the question and several others, and to give much annoyance by not answering them, but it could not be avoided. She felt that she could not explain matters yet. Things fell out exactly as she anticipated; Bella was only curious, but Polly was decidedly angry; she felt that she had a right to inquire, and she exercised it,—with no good results for when, on Bill's refusing to assign any reasons, she forbade her going to Wrugglesby, the girl showed every intention of going in spite of her. Whereupon Polly, who by this time knew she could not always drive the stubborn Bill, became very dignified, retreating from her post of dictator behind a manner of superior and chilling indifference, after which she climbed down from her pinnacle of outraged authority and informed the offender that she should not pay her fare.

"No, of course not," Bill said readily; "I have some money."

And she had ; for it so happened that after a battle royal with Polly one day she had succeeded in arranging for wages of a pound a month, the same as any other little servant. Polly had vowed that she should not have it, that she was a partner in the firm and not a paid servant, but Bill stood to her guns, foregoing any future profits but insisting on present wages ; and as she struck work when they were not paid she contrived to get them regularly, and so to have a little money for an emergency. Remembering which Polly said ungraciously : "At any rate you can't go until the one o'clock train."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE one o'clock train was a very slow one, but it suited Bill admirably, and by it she went the next day.

It was nearly three when the one clerk who looked out on Wrugglesby High Street from Mr. Stevens's office-window, saw the small figure cross the road and come towards the door.

"A lady to see you, sir,—Miss Alardy."

The clerk announced this to his employer, although he thought Miss Alardy an exceedingly young lady to consult a lawyer on her own account. Mr. Stevens thought so too ; he had a hazy recollection on hearing the name that she must be one of Miss Brownlow's nieces, but he was not sure of the relationship until he saw the girl. Then he remembered her as the youngest of the nieces, the one whom, it seemed only the other day, he used to see walking beside the governess with a dusky mane of hair hanging about her shoulders and a general appearance suggestive of a tendency to turn very restive on provocation.

"Well, and what has brought you to Wrugglesby?" he said when he

had asked after the other cousins. No one treated Bill in a business-like way ; even the grocer at Bayswater regarded her as a man and a brother. Mr. Stevens certainly had no idea of being professionally consulted by this slip of a girl.

"I have come to see you," she answered simply. "I want to ask you a question, a law question."

She had her purse in her hand and looked somehow as if she were prepared to pay six-and-eightpence, cash down, for his opinion.

"I will try to answer you," he said with as much gravity as he could contrive. "What is this question?"

"It begins in the year 1799," she said without more ado. "In that year a man, Roger Corby,—perhaps you have heard of him? But that does not matter—in the year 1799 he gave a piece of land to another man—Briant. He gave it for ninety-nine years but no rent was to be paid."

"A lease, that is," the lawyer said, "and the rental probably one peppercorn payable if demanded. Yes, proceed."

"This year," Bill said, "the time will be up, and I imagine Roger Corby would get his land back if he were alive?"

"Naturally."

"But he is not alive, so I suppose his descendants would get it?"

"Yes, that is what is usually expected to take place."

"He has only got one descendant : she comes like this," and Bill took up some books which lay on the table. "Roger Corby's only son died a year after him,"—she put a thin black book down,—"*he is dead, you see*"—pushing the book away—"and so does not count. The son's only child, a daughter, is dead too, but she married when she was fairly young and she married twice. She ran

away from her first husband and he divorced her; then she married the other man and had one son, the only child she had. Well, the son is dead too and the only person left is his daughter. Would she be able to get the land at the end of the ninety-nine years?"

"Most probably, if she has the necessary documents and can prove she is legally descended from Roger Corby."

Bill said "Thank you," and sat thinking a minute. The lawyer watched her curiously, feeling sure there must be something behind all this, and wondering a little what it could be.

"Mr. Briant," Bill said at last,— "I mean the Mr. Briant who now has the land—does not think it will be claimed, at least I believe not; he probably does not know of the second marriage of Wilhelmina Corby, and the son and the granddaughter."

"Which means," Stevens observed, "that he will very strongly object to acknowledging their existence and will do his best to keep what he has got. Were I the granddaughter, I think I should first make quite sure that the thing in question was worth fighting for, and also I should be very clear that Wilhelmina Corby was divorced from her first husband and legally married to her second; can you tell me these things?"

Bill could tell him one of the things. "Do you know Sandover?" she asked. "Yes? A good part of Sandover now stands on the land; of course at the time it was given it was only corn fields and grass, but now it must be valuable."

Mr. Stevens whistled, although it was supposed to be a business interview. "It is worth something, I admit. Now for Wilhelmina Corby,—how about her?"

"It would have to be found out,"

Bill said, "but I believe it is all right. But tell me, what did you mean by necessary documents?"

"First and principally the counterpart of the lease. You don't know what that is? It is an exact copy of the deed, the lease which is in possession of the man who now has the land and by right of which he has it. There is certain to have been such a deed; this man, Briant, is sure to have his lease, and unless the granddaughter can produce her counterpart she would find it well nigh impossible to prove her case. Has she got it, do you think?"

Bill did not know, and Mr. Stevens went on to say:—"In the first instance it would probably have been among Roger Corby's papers, and so it may have passed into his granddaughter's keeping; if it did, the question is what became of it when she changed husbands? And if she kept it in her possession, has her granddaughter got it still, or failing that, is it possible to trace it?"

Bill considered a while; she was thinking of the little oak box and her search in it. "There is an oak box," she said at last; "it is used as an ottoman in my bedroom, but I have heard that it belonged to my grandmother. It is full of papers, mostly letters and recipes of my mother's, but there are a few which are older, one or two very large, tough, yellowish ones, not written in the ordinary way. I looked at them yesterday but I could not make them out, except that the name Corby occurs in them, and that at least one has the date 1799. Do you think the thing we want is there?"

"I think it is just possible." Mr. Stevens was not altogether surprised at this dropping of the impersonal. "So you are the granddaughter of Wilhelmina Corby, are you?"

"Yes. I did not bring the box with me, but I wish I had now."

"Perhaps there is nothing of value in it. What are these old papers like? Can you describe them to me?"

Bill did as well as she could, and though the description was not very detailed Mr. Stevens seemed satisfied. "I do not know," he said, "if you have the counterpart, but I should say from what you tell me that you must have one or two of the old Corby documents. Don't think that I mean they are of any pecuniary value, as the chances are all against it; the counterpart, if we could find it, might be, but the others are just so much legal lumber."

Bill did not seem troubled by this discouraging remark, nor yet by the lawyer's next words: "If it is not a rude question, may I ask how much of all this does your cousin's solicitor know?"

"We have not got a solicitor," Bill answered readily. "Mr. Brownlow made Aunt Isabel's will, but he is dead now, and when he was alive we did not see anything of him. Polly thought him very stupid."

"Polly? That's Miss Haines is it not? Has your coming to me her sanction?"

It had not, for the very good reason that Bill had not consulted her on the subject, or even informed her that any such subject existed; accordingly she told Mr. Stevens so, and explained that the affair was her own entirely.

"Am I to understand," the puzzled man enquired, "that she knows nothing at all about this?"

"No," Bill told him, "she doesn't even know my grandmother was a Corby. I did not know much myself before Christmas, and when I did know, it hardly seemed worth while telling her. I did not realise then

that it might be valuable; I did not realise that till the night before last."

"The night before last? What happened then?"

"I wanted money desperately, and I thought and thought of ways of getting it."

Mr. Stevens repressed an inclination to smile. "You have by no means got it yet in spite of your interesting story," he said. "Let me enumerate some of the difficulties in the way. Supposing you have the counterpart of the lease and it is all correct, you have got to be sure of several things,—that none of all these people between yourself and Roger Corby were bankrupt, that they made no awkward marriage-settlements, and, if they died intestate, left no more than one child apiece to survive them."

"These things will have to be found out," Bill said calmly. "Marriage-settlements I don't know anything about; children I do. There were no more than I have said, or at least none that lived to grow up; I have no relations at all on my father's side. As for bankrupt, I believe it is all right, but I am not sure; Roger Corby died in debt, though I think it was all paid off after his death. But I know he was in debt when he died, that is why Wilhelmina, my grandmother, had his body carried away by night."

Mr. Stevens had heard something of this story but always believed it to be a mere local tradition. "I had no idea it really happened," he said.

Bill assured him that she had excellent reasons for believing that it did; then she returned to the subject of more direct interest to herself. "Supposing," she said, "that all these things of which you spoke were right, what then?"

"Then, if you can get over the difficulty of the divorce and remarriage

and subsequent birth of a son, you should have a very good case and ought, if all goes well, eventually to get the money you so much need; or rather certain persons in authority would get it to hold in trust for you."

"In trust for me?" Bill said with a rather anxious look.

"Certainly; you are not of age yet are you? Eighteen? The law does not consider you of age till you are twenty-one. Until that time the money, if you get it, will be in the hands of guardians who will manage it entirely and only allow you the use of a moderate and reasonable proportion."

"Polly and Theresa are called my guardians; would they have to look after the money?"

"That depends," Mr. Stevens said. "If they are only 'called' your guardians, the court, if the case were decided in your favour, would appoint some one to look after you and your money; you would be a ward of the court, and the court takes very great care of its wards and looks after them in a manner not always permitted to parents nowadays. If, on the other hand, your cousins are legally appointed your guardians, they would, until you were twenty-one, have the control of your property, applying it solely for your benefit and allowing you a certain amount for your use. But, remember, they could not do as they chose with it, for they could be called upon to give a very exact account of their proceedings."

Bill breathed a sigh of relief. "That's all right," she said. "Polly and Theresa, more especially Polly, are set down in Aunt Isabel's will as my guardians; I should be able to manage if I got the money."

"They would not allow you more than a comparatively small sum; you could not touch any great amount. I don't fancy you would be much better

off than under the court if you wanted to do anything foolish, unless of course, the folly took the form of an unwise marriage, when you certainly would have more liberty if you were not a ward of the court."

Bill laughed softly. "I will tell you what I will do if I get the money," she said. "I shall give Polly so much a year for the rest of her life; she deserves it and I would give her as much as I could afford; and with the rest I should do what I liked. We should arrange it somehow; Polly would do as I told her. There is time at least to try to find some way of doing it legally, but if I could not find one I don't see that it would so very much matter, because Polly would be the person who did wrong according to the law and I should be the person who suffered wrong, and consequently the one who ought to have her up when I was old enough. As the case would really be the other way round, I should not have her up, and she could not have me up, so it would be all right."

"Oh," Mr. Stevens remarked drily, "that is how you think you will arrange matters, is it? It strikes me you are a worthy granddaughter of Wilhelmina the wilful. I fancy though you will find more obstacles than you bargain for in this little game; where, for instance, does the other cousin and guardian come in?"

"I should have to explain to Theresa that it was right. You would think it so if you knew. Theresa will always do what she thinks right, and Polly will do what she is made to do. To get your own way is mostly a matter of time."

"This time I should not be surprised if it took you till one-and-twenty. Law is not so easy to play with as you think; and cases of this sort are not so easy to win either, neither are they settled in a hurry."

Bill was prepared for that. "How long do you think it would take?" she asked. "A year?"

"Probably; it might be longer, or it might, if you have very good luck and few difficulties, be a little shorter."

"Would it cost a great deal?"

"It could not be done for nothing."

"Would a hundred pounds be any good to start with?"

"It would be excellent."

Bill put her hand into her pocket and drew out the diamond buckles: "I don't know what they are worth," she said as she placed them before the astonished lawyer, "but at least a hundred pounds; more than that I expect."

"Where did you get them?" Mr. Stevens had taken one to the window and glanced from it to the girl.

"Old Mr. Harborough gave them to me before he died."

"What!" The lawyer lost all interest in the buckles and stood staring at their owner, wondering what new surprise this granddaughter of the Corbys was going to develope.

"Mr. Harborough gave them to me," she repeated. "They are my very own; young Mr. Harborough was there at the time they were given, and he said they were my own and no one could take them away. I did mean to keep them for another purpose, but I believe it would be more right to use them for this."

"Have you any idea what these buckles are worth?"

"More than a hundred pounds," Bill said readily; "they will do to begin the case, won't they?"

"It is altogether extraordinary," the lawyer muttered, and began to wrap the buckles in paper with the resigned air of one who gives up a problem.

He offered the parcel to Bill but she put her hands behind her back;

"I want you to keep them," she said, "and begin at once."

It was perhaps as well that Mr. Stevens was not busy that afternoon, for he found there were several more points to be explained to his young client, among others that she herself could not bring an action or give directions for legal proceedings. This difficulty she disposed of by undertaking to arrange matters with Polly within two days. Another point the good man had to explain was that no one would undertake the case without first knowing a great deal more about it. This the indefatigable Bill met with a promise to send the oak box to him by an early train the next morning, and to set to work at once to find out any and every detail she could concerning the first Wilhelmina. When at last Mr. Stevens, again handing her the buckles, told her that her method of payment was not according to custom, she was still not nonplussed. "Shall I get them sold," she asked, "and give you the money?"

"Certainly not; don't attempt to sell them. And listen to me: I should not in any circumstances undertake this business for you; I will examine the contents of the box if you like, and tell you how I think you stand; but I would not undertake the case, which is completely out of my range. I am a country lawyer with quite as much country work as I can do; I am not a very young man, not a very poor one, and not at all an ambitious one. I have neither the time nor the inclination for such a piece of work as this."

"But you could find someone who would do it?" Bill asked, not in the least impressed by the gravity of his manner.

"I suppose I could," he said, smiling in spite of himself. "But even if I were to find someone, and there really was something for that some-

one to do, you must see that there are a good many things to settle before it comes to terms. When, and if, it does your cousin is the proper person to be consulted."

But Bill did not agree with him there. She pointed out that the affair was hers and the buckles hers; still she conceded that Polly could be talked to, and, since he wished it, she would take the buckles back to town. She put them in her pocket again to the no small uneasiness of Mr. Stevens, although, as she herself said, they were too big to drop out, and no one would expect to find anything of value in her pocket.

She was about to leave, by no means dissatisfied with the interview, when Mr. Stevens made a remark which caused her to pause. After saying that she must not make sure of her position, and that he himself could give her no hope until he had examined the contents of the oak box, he concluded: "And even if everything else proves satisfactory, it is quite possible you will come to grief over the matter of the divorce; the other side would be sure to make the most of that; it will have to be gone into very thoroughly."

Bill stopped on the threshold. "Do you mean," she asked, "that you will have to go into it thoroughly, or that it will have to be done in public?"

"I should not have much to do with it, but both your lawyers and those on the opposite side would have plenty; it is a point on which a good deal might turn."

"I had not thought of that," and Bill's face clouded.

"You had better think of it," the lawyer said, "for it will certainly arise. You must be sure, and the other side would insist on being sure, that there was a divorce; they would want the date of it and the date of

the second marriage and the date of the birth of the child."

"Will they want the name of the first husband?"

"Certainly."

"Will it be published in the papers?"

"It would probably figure in the reports of the case."

"Then I am not at all sure the case can ever come off," Bill said to Mr. Stevens's great astonishment.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Because the first husband is alive, and I would not hurt him for all the world."

Mr. Stevens regarded this as a matter of sentiment, but a sentiment he could honour, though he hardly knew how to advise. "Well," he said at last, "you need not, and indeed cannot, do anything for a long time. I will look over your papers and tell you how I think you stand, and by that time you will have been able to decide what you wish to do."

But this was not Bill's manner of going to work at all. "Thank you very much," she said, "but I think I must decide sooner than that. When does the last up-train leave for London? Eight o'clock, is it? Thank you, I will decide before that. Perhaps I had better not come to see you so late; I will write from town."

"My dear young lady," the lawyer said, moved by the gravity of her face and manner, "there is no need to take the matter so seriously, or to do anything in such a hurry. Send me the box, and afterwards we will talk over what can be done."

But though Bill again thanked him, not disagreeing with him this time, he was not at all sure that he had convinced her.

"It's a pity if she drops it," he meditated as he watched her go down

the street. "She would win if she went in, somehow—and probably do precisely what she pleased with her fortune when she got it. She is the kind that does; she would bamboozle the Court of Chancery and dance through an Act of Parliament."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE waiting-room of a railway-station is not usually selected as the best place in which to think seriously over a matter of perplexity. But if the waiting-room be attached to the station at a very small country town where trains are infrequent and passengers few, a worse place might be chosen; it has at least the merit of freedom from friendly advice. Moreover the fact of a person sitting there doing absolutely nothing for an hour or more creates no surprise, as it is to be presumed he is only waiting for the next train. On the January afternoon of Bill's visit to Wrugglesby she found the waiting-room an admirable place for quiet thought. When she left Mr. Stevens's office she went straight to the station and, sitting down with her back to the window, tried to think over the difficulties suggested by the lawyer's words.

The difficulties resolved themselves into one and one only,—Mr. Dane. The other obstacles to the success of her undertaking might or might not prove insurmountable; at any rate Bill would face them undauntedly with a light heart and a clear conscience. But Mr. Dane was another matter; she could not wilfully, and with her eyes open, do what she felt sure would give him pain; and yet,—how could she give up this enterprise?

At this point two stout women entered the waiting-room. They were going to Darvel by the next down train in some twenty minutes' time,

and had walked in three miles from a neighbouring village; when one walks three miles the balance of a spare half-hour is not much to allow for catching a train. They were in "nice time," they told each other, though they seemed flustered and annoyed when they found the booking-office still closed. Bill heard what they said without understanding, just as she saw them without perceiving; she sat looking straight before her though her true gaze was inwards. They glanced at her once or twice. "A natural, poor thing," was the conclusion they came to. "They didn't oughter let her be about alone like that," was their final opinion as she rose from her seat and walked out of the waiting-room.

Bill left the station, turned out of the main street, and took the road to Ashelton. She had decided what to do: she would go to Mr. Dane, not to ask his permission to claim her connection with the Corby family and consequently to drag him and his past before the eyes of his neighbours, but to tell him her story and ask his advice. She loved him so well that she felt sure he would give his advice without prejudice; she was absolutely certain that he would not misunderstand or misjudge. She started on her walk with a comparatively quiet mind, not an absolutely quiet one for she knew she must give a full confidence or none at all. She must tell all, even including that which concerned Kit Harborough, and the dream which was a dream no more.

At first Bill thought of nothing but what she had to tell, but bit by bit the solitude of the road and the exhilaration of the exercise soothed her so that she thought no more. Six miles of lonely road, a level country wide spread and bare on either hand, a silent wintry afternoon with the suggestion of twilight

gathering before the village was reached,—what more could one ask to minister to a mind diseased? Nothing, in Bill's opinion, as she walked the six miles in something under an hour and a half, without a single doubt of her ability to walk them back again after dark and her pleasure in doing it.

But she did not walk those six miles back: the proprietor of the White Horse at Ashelton received a request during the evening for the little cart and old pony for Mr. Dane. And it is to be presumed he drove Bill to Wrugglesby in time for the eight o'clock train, for some sort of vehicle brought her to the station in time for that train, and a little after eight o'clock Mr. Dane rang at the private house of Stevens the lawyer.

Mrs. Stevens wanted very much to know what had brought Mr. Dane to see her husband at that time in the evening. She had a great opinion of Mr. Dane, of whom she knew little, and of his Family (with a capital F), of which she knew less. She and Mr. Johnson had conferred more than once on the subject of the relative who was a lord and the other relative who was a bishop, and the mystery why Mr. Dane himself was—if not a bishop or a lord—at least something more than a country parson. On that particular evening, after Mr. Dane had left, Mrs. Stevens naturally wished to know the reason of his visit; first she sought indirectly for information and learned nothing; then she asked boldly what had brought him there that night.

"A small pony-cart, my dear," Mr. Stevens said amiably; "and the same vehicle has taken him away again. I hope he will reach his destination safely, for he is not as young as he was and the night is dark, though the pony, I must admit, looks a safe beast."

Mrs. Stevens, being somewhat annoyed by this answer, condescended to no more questions and maintained a dignified silence for the rest of the evening,—a proceeding which it is to be feared did not greatly trouble Mr. Stevens, since he was so completely engrossed in his own meditations that he was not aware of it. After Mrs. Stevens had gone to bed he poked the fire into a blaze and observed to the crackling coals: "You were a fool, Wilhelmina the first, a fool! You threw away a very fine and noble gentleman for your gipsy lover." And being a country lawyer of somewhat prosaic practice, and being also a man of genial sympathies, he once more gave himself up to meditations on the story which had been told him that night.

And Mr. Dane, having reached home in safety, also thought a little of the story which had been revived that night. But not for long; he resolutely put it away from him as he put away the diamond buckles Bill had left. She had left them on purpose and with a definite understanding. "You must keep them, Monseigneur," she said. "I can reclaim them, if I ever have the money, and if you do not sell them before. I cannot have you undertake this great thing for me unless you will have them as a sort of guarantee; I would rather you kept them; it is better so." So he kept them, for after he had seen how she carried them loose in her pocket and heard how she kept them in a hole in the kitchen-wall, he also thought that it was better so.

Bill went back to London without her buckles, but Polly was not aware of the fact. Indeed Polly did not hear anything much about the visit to Wrugglesby that evening, for Bill did not reach home till late, too late to tell all about it, she said, and put

off the explanation till the next day when she promised to tell Polly everything. Bella was rather disappointed by this arrangement for she would be out then,—at the dressmaker's in the morning and at Mrs. James Brownlow's in the afternoon. It must be admitted that, fond as Bill was of her cousin, Bella's absence suited her well, for she wanted to have a long and somewhat difficult talk with Polly.

Bella went out early, and early also went the little oak box by rail to Wrugglesby, carefully addressed and properly insured as Mr. Stevens had impressed upon Bill it must be. Before it went she pulled off the chintz cover from the top and took one thing from the inside; not a document or deed, or even one of her mother's recipes, only a fossil sea-urchin found on the beach at Bymouth on a sweet September morning. She hid it away among her linen; then she nailed down the lid of the box, tied a rope round it, and sent it away.

Polly did not know it had gone until later when Bill told her in the course of their talk. This talk did not prove so difficult as Bill had anticipated, for Polly was quick to grasp the possibilities of the case. It was true, Bill had acted without her consent and in a measure outraged her in her part of guardian; but Polly was not always playing that part, and she was, as the late Mr. Brownlow had said, a capital woman of business; when it came to plain facts apart from appearances, Bill's conduct and communication wore a very different aspect. As Polly said: "You risk nothing; even if you lose you are no worse off than you were except for those diamond buckles—" (here, in spite of a previous and very eloquent statement of her opinion of Bill's giving them up, Polly could not forbear from making a short digres-

sion and recapitulation of her sentiments)—"except for those buckles, you lose nothing since Mr. Dane is going to advance the money and take all the trouble. You are quite sure he means you only to pay if you win? You lose nothing if you fail and if you succeed—well!"

The prospect seemed almost too much for Polly, and Bill forebore to mention any of her own plans regarding the money, should she win it. Polly, of course, had something to say about the way in which she had not been consulted, though not much, for, as she admitted, Bill "had done very well;" moreover, she was somewhat mollified by the nominal share in future transactions which Bill assured her would be hers. Bill explained matters as clearly as she could to Polly's great satisfaction and sufficient enlightenment. In a matter of this sort Polly was quick to grasp the essential points, and in a matter of any sort even quicker to accommodate herself to the part she was to play. There was one thing, however, which Polly did not understand, and which Bill would not explain,—the reason that had induced Mr. Dane to follow such an extraordinary course as he had, and not only to give his sanction to the proceedings but also to lend active and financial assistance.

"I can't tell you," was all Bill would say; "you would not understand. I hardly know myself and I certainly can't explain. I can't talk about him, he is,—he is too good."

Polly was not satisfied, but she could get no other explanation, and when Bill left her after some rather able though unsuccessful cross-examination, she hurled after her as a parting shot: "It is a very peculiar thing, Bill, very peculiar indeed, the way in which elderly gentlemen do things for you. One gives you a pair

of diamond buckles, and another is undertaking a law-case for you. It is most peculiar, not to put too fine a point upon it,—most peculiar!”

And though Polly went to the kitchen-door and raised her voice so that Bill who had gone up-stairs should not lose any of the remark, she still contrived to throw a vast deal of meaning into the last words and the sniff which followed them. But Bill, if she heard, did not answer, which was wise; and Polly, who was too satisfied with the results of Bill’s “peculiarity” to trouble very much about explanations, went back to her work and asked no more unanswerable questions.

Bella and Theresa had to be taken into confidence of course, but neither of them thought the matter so important as Bill and Polly did. It was interesting to know all about Bill’s people, but the substantial benefits to be reaped from it seemed uncertain and shadowy. “It was all rather improbable and unwise,” Theresa said, while Bella, being full of her own concerns, hardly understood what was being discussed; and both sisters entirely failed to realise the value of success should it ever be attained.

“They are so stupid,” Polly once said impatiently; “they don’t grasp anything out of their own groove. I’ve no patience with either of them; they are thorough Brownlows, without an ounce of vitality between them. They’re all right so long as you put them in ordinary circumstances,—a decent house with a decent servant, decent meals at regular hours, and a decent husband to come home at regular times and provide the money. But as for striking out a line for themselves, or saving a situation, or doing or even understanding anything which is out of their ordinary rut or wants a small amount of enterprise, they simply can’t do it!”

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Bill laughed a little, though she could not deny the truth of at least part of the indictment. She could not deny to herself either that this same characteristic of the sisters made it easier for her to carry through, unquestioned and undisturbed, the enterprises which they could neither undertake nor understand. However, she did not remark on this to Polly, but merely said: “I think Bella and T. are both rather occupied with their own concerns just now.”

Polly would not allow this excuse to Theresa, though she admitted it might hold good for Bella whose wedding-day was so near. Bella’s wedding occupied all their minds about this time, Polly being determined that it should be of suitable though quiet magnificence. “Of course we are still in mourning,” she said, “or at least we can reckon we are; Aunt was almost like a mother to us, besides an out of mourning wedding would cost so much. As it is, we can make a very good show indeed at a reasonable price. And I mean to do it too, Bill; we are quite as good as the Dawsons, and I’m not going to let them think we are not.” And Polly made all the preparations in her power; her chief cause of trouble being that, since Bella was to be married at Ashelton, she herself could not be at the base of operations very long beforehand.

Bella left town early in February, in the company of Jack who had come to town on business. When Polly heard of his coming she regretted that she could not offer him the hospitality she had offered Gilchrist, but her house was too full now to allow of it. However, Jack came to see them and stopped some time and was, as Polly said, “as pleasant as possible and quite different from Mr. Gilchrist Harborough.” Indeed, Jack, instead of disapproving of Bill’s working, in-

sisted on helping her to clear the table, making much fun over it. He always seemed to regard Bill as a jolly little school-girl not to be taken seriously; that day he teased her about the apples she took to eat in the train on her journey to Bymouth. Bill told him they were Polly's, but he would not believe her, and they laughed over it for some time. Later on, however, she became serious and asked him some questions about the Harborough lawsuit. Of late Jack had become somewhat intimate with Gilchrist; Bill had gathered this from Bella's talk, and thinking that, if anyone could tell her of the present condition of the Harborough case, Jack could, she questioned him on it.

"Why, Lady of Law," he exclaimed when he found out how much she knew of the original claim, "you seem to know a good deal about it already!"

"Yes, I heard all about that part," she told him; and he remembered that Gilchrist had been very often to Haylands during the summer, so often that he had once thought there was some sort of an understanding between Bill and the Australian, though latterly he had begun to doubt it. "I am afraid," he said, thinking her interest in the case was on Gilchrist's account, "I am afraid your friend won't get this affair settled in a hurry; there seem to be a hundred and one things to prove."

"Yes! What! Tell me."

He smiled at her earnestness. "Let me see," he said, "what shall I tell you? I have heard about it no end of times, but I am not so very much the wiser and I'm sure you won't be; still, here goes. The lawyers now, I believe, are busy trying to find out whether this precious rule of the youngest son inheriting applies to sons only, or whether it can be

extended to other relations when the sons give out."

"Can't it? I should have thought it could."

"Ah, but you're not a lawyer; lawyers don't think, they prove. They say sometimes the extension is allowed and sometimes it is not, according to early arrangement or tradition or something; they have got to find out how the first Harborough had his affairs arranged. Then another question they are busy about is how much old Harborough knew of the existence of another claimant, and I don't see how they are ever to discover that in the circumstances. Things are rather mixed altogether; for instance, your friend's father was born in 1845, old Harborough came into the property that same year, and that year also there died his youngest brother, the one who should have had the property,—that is what I call indecently crowding events to no purpose. Then the old man's will seems likely to prove another bone of contention,—whether he had a right to make a will, why he made it, whether he believed his position insecure and made it to strengthen it, or whether he thought it secure and made it in good faith,—oh, it is a lovely tangle I can tell you! Harborough has talked to me about it till I have completely forgotten which party wants to prove what, and have got so mixed myself that I have gone home deciding to sow estates-tail in the home-field, drain the pond and turn it into an estate in fee simple to settle on my bonny bride."

He drew Bella's hand into his own as he spoke, and it was easy to see from their faces that there would be no more discussion of the Harborough case for the present. But Bill could not forbear asking one last question: "I suppose it will take a long time to settle?"

"Years! You'll have time to grow up twice over before they are done squabbling, and Bella will be a staid and sober matron by the time the decision is given."

Bella combated this opinion, not because she doubted the length of the Harborough lawsuit but because she vowed she never would be staid and sober. A conversation natural to the circumstances ensued, and lasted until Jack and Bella left the house together.

It was of course quite out of the question for both Bill and Polly to attend Bella's wedding, as they could not leave the house to take care of itself, so it had been arranged for Bill to stay and Polly to go. It was really important that she should be present at the function, if for no other reason than her own belief that Bella and Theresa would not be equal to the situation and the Dawson family in its strength. "They would never manage without me," Polly said with conviction. "I shall go down a day or two beforehand,—I really must, to see after things. You can do here quite as well as I can, and no one need know you are alone; I am not afraid to trust you, as I know you can take very good care of yourself and the house."

To this Bill agreed. "Of course I shall be all right," she said. "You had better stay as long as Bella and Theresa want you."

But Polly had decided not to remain after the wedding. "There will be no need for me to do that," she said. "I shall go several days before to see that everything is arranged properly and I shall come back directly after. Or,—no, on second thoughts, I think it had better be the day after; it would perhaps be nicer if I waited till the day after, as there will be such a lot of clearing up to do."

Bill heard this last decision with a

smile, she knew that Polly's "clearing up" would mean a substantial hamper-shaped addition to her luggage. But she said nothing, as she knew Theresa would not mind, and Polly fulfilled her plan exactly. She went to Wruglesby three days before the wedding with the most wonderful costume that even her ingenuity had ever compassed, safely packed in a cardboard box and placed on the seat beside her.

Polly's work, and she certainly did work during those three days, was not in vain. Bella's wedding was in every way successful. The Dawson family was properly impressed with the desirability of the new connection; Mrs. Dawson was almost satisfied, and Miss Gladys Dawson charmingly (and unpleasantly) put in her place by the presiding genius. Polly really was in her element that day and showed to the best advantage. Mrs. Stevens was warm in her praises, and even Gilchrist Harborough, who was there more as the bridegroom's friend than the bride's, thought that his former opinion of Miss Haines had been unjust.

"It really was as nice a wedding as I have ever seen," was Miss Gruet's opinion, and in the main Ashelton agreed with her, finding in the event a delightful subject of conversation during the lengthening days.

"It is quite *the* event of the spring," Miss Minchin said gaily. So it was in Ashelton, and beyond Ashelton the ladies did not take very much account.

Beyond Ashelton, at the little house at Bayswater, there was another event, and one of such interest to those concerned that even Polly for a time regarded Bella's wedding as of secondary importance. Mr. Stevens had examined the contents of Bill's box and found that the deed dated 1799 was indeed the counterpart of the lease granted by Roger Corby in the year that Peter Harborough was

shot. Mr. Dane, acting upon this information, had been to a certain old established firm of solicitors in London and had seen the senior partner. He was not the man who, something more than forty years ago, had helped to cut the bond Wilhelmina Corby had tried to break for herself; nevertheless he soon knew all about it, for it was recorded in the annals of the firm and only needed to be looked up. Looked up it accordingly was, together with other events, dates, and certificates; and the lease and the information and everything else there was to place were placed in the hands of this lawyer who, at Mr. Dane's request, undertook the case Mr. Stevens had refused. Altogether, what with one thing and another, things were progressing surprisingly well, and Polly and Bill had good reason to congratulate themselves.

Before the spring was over Mr.

Briant of Sandover felt the consequences of the energy and inquiry Bill had provoked, for he received the most unwelcome intelligence that a descendant of the Corbys existed and claimed, in a purely legal and formal manner, a large piece of his valuable Sandover estate. He did not believe the claim genuine; and then he did not believe it could be substantiated; and in any case he was, if possible, going to contest it, for he had always believed there were no legitimate descendants of the Corbys left.

"It rains lawsuits," he grumbled once; "before Kit Harborough is through with his trouble I am let in for one. Although," so he added to a friend, "between you and me, I should be glad to see the boy clear of his business half as well as I shall be of Mary Ann Haines, guardian of somebody Corby's granddaughter."

(To be continued.)

GODS AND LITTLE FISHES.

It may doubtless be better to be a little living fish than a big dead god; but at any rate it is a fine thing to be a god and have your sport in the deep. Glad are the gods always for the little fishes. Life to some of us without them would be vanity; to others they spell not sport, but life or death. The common herring, the vulgar sprat, hawked, three for a penny in noisome boxes, are arbiters of weal or woe to many a snug houseful, and in their maws hold poverty or wealth. But you have to see them in their native element before you can understand this.

It was for this the Minister's landlady was busy buttering her thickest biscuits while the Minister was upstairs looking out an old jersey, relic of fishing-days in an Iona cobble in these careless college vacations ere yet parishes had power to trouble. She tore a piece from *THE SCOTSMAN*,—the Minister had but two idols, his paper and his pipe—and wrapped up the provender in her own kindly canny fashion, while the Minister came tripping down the stair, his eyes shining, whistling *THE GLENDARUEL HIGHLANDERS*, a certain proof of elation with him.

"You see," he explained gravely as he saw my raised eyebrows, "I have been out often enough with the drift-net but never with the trawl."

"Oh yes," said I, and pretended to understand; though why a man should grow excited at the prospect of a trawl while the thought of the drift leaves him perfectly calm, is beyond me. The truth is, once the

salt sea has stung your blood and you have been to the killing of the fish, not even age and infirmity can keep you from the trade, drift, trawl, or line. Even a douce minister will be wildly excited over a good catch. Once a fisher, always a fisher.

"Come on then and let's not keep the men waiting. The boats from the head of the loch are away this while."

The harbour was full of brown sails, and boats were moving as we drew near. Time and tide and fish wait on no man, not even on a minister; and had the *WELCOME HOME*! been standing down channel now, we had known better than to grumble.

"Ha, there she lies," exclaimed the Minister, who had been anxiously scanning the craft. "She's at anchor and not a soul aboard."

And sure enough when we rounded the breast-wall, behold our crew easily dispersed on herring-boxes, with backs rounded, elbows planted on knees, legs up to chins. What mastery of the sweet art of lounging lies in these great slack frames, coiled so loosely into the laziest of postures! See your coast fisherman as he leans his folded arms on the harbour-wall or stretches his legs on the warm grass at the quay-head; no professional tramp could lounge it more genuinely.

A lazy calling, is it, wise and gentle tourist, loftily eyeing the recumbent figure from your cushioned seat? The cat is lazy enough when she basks in the sun,—but see puss after her mouse. Put your loafing lazy fisherman into his skiff, get the nets in and the sails up,—and you

will see industry, energy, keenness, aye and even nimbleness, of the rarest kind. Once aboard, the clumsiest figure there will wake into strenuous life. Your lazy, lounging, lubberly fisherman is out moiling and sweating by night when you are snug abed, and thinks himself lucky if he has not to sit mending his nets all day into the bargain.

"Hullo, Mitchell," cried the Minister to a big fellow passing with an enormous armful of provender, "are you stocking an ironclad?"

A broad smile of delight was the sole answer. These grand fellows, it is plain, like a word from the pastor; no flippant jesters at life are these, but serious, deep-thinking Celts, men with the religious cast of spirit. Not that they have no humour,—far from it; but humour is one thing and a serious; ribald flip and jest are another.

"There's a couple of Jonahs to-night," laughed our Skipper from his herring-box, a great, black-faced fellow with a chest like a bull. "Did you ever hear, sir, of the minister on the east coast? If he only takes a squint at the boats when they are going oot, there's not a fish for them that night!"

The group shook with deep-chested, silent laughter.

"Put us overboard, then," said the Minister, "and let us drown."

At this there was another laugh of the same noiseless kind.

"No fears, sir," put in the irrepressible Johnstone,—he was the recognised wag—"a Jonah'll no droon." On this followed more laughter. "Besides there's a whale about the noo!" And again came the silent chorus.

"Twas poor enough jesting, I grant you, for a drawing-room; but with ten men in an overloaded punt, its gunwale just lipping the water and taking it in at a dozen places, quite as lively as there is any need for.

We are the last of the boats, but there is no sign of haste. Everything is done with a fine leisure that comes of confident skill. The Minister takes the helm with acclamation, and there is manifest delight when he gets the boat out of harbour with full sails and cuts well to windward of *THE SAUCY LASS*.

"You're doin' fine," comments the Skipper approvingly, eyeing the widening gap. The others affect not to see the humiliated boat, but they know its position to an inch and have an innuendo ready for its helmsman next day.

"There was a whale," says Johnstone slowly and impressively if inconsecutively, "doon by the Mull Dhu this mornin'; but I'm dootin' he's awa up the loch noo."

There was a general stir at this which showed that all minds had been busy with the problem of destination.

"Is that the MacGregors puttin' about?" asked the Skipper.

"It's just them. They'll be for up the loch."

"Put her round, sir; that's right! A wee bit more on the wind; you'll do!"

Away we went on a dancing sea, the falling sun throwing its scarlet and gold athwart the waves behind us. A boat standing south was caught in the glow and sheeted with flame. An otter flashed up between us and the west, its coat strewn with diamonds. A long, black snout suddenly pushed along above water over our bow.

"There he is now, boys! He's workin' north. We'll do yet, boys," shouted Johnstone cheerily.

In the long run up the loch we had time to talk theology. There seemed to prevail a general suspicion of Popery, and a venerable Principal, boasting descent from the Covenanters, was frankly pointed at. "He's the

boy," said Johnstone warmly, of a certain notorious defender of the faith and a thorn in the flesh to all Ritualists. The Skipper, an elder of the Kirk, listened gravely and seemed to agree. The discussion was interrupted by the anchor going down, MacBride at the bow being a silent man and a practical creature thinking of supper. The funnel was put in, the fire lit, and tea made in a kettle. Cups were displaced by porridge-bowls, slices of tongue were served up in soup-plates, and we suppered sumptuously on thick bread and butter, the cook complacently receiving compliments. Out in that superb air everything tasted superbly.

The unwritten but unbroken law of the herring-fishing is that the fishing shall not begin till the sun has gone an hour; and religiously we sat till the full time had lapsed.

"On with your breeks," cried the Minister, pocketing his watch; "up anchor!"

He had assumed command; and as the herring-fishing is a scaly operation, I hastened to draw over my own a pair of the Minister's cast-off trousers.

"Now you're dressed," remarked Johnstone approvingly; and Neil passed me a lump of rope to gird my loins withal. "That's what we put on," he said. It went round me twice; it's not everybody has the proportions of a Loch Fyne fisherman. They themselves got their huge limbs into stiff oilskin trousers and drew on waterproof sleeves. You will find few people so careful of themselves as these big fellows. The clothing they wear is astonishing: the thickest of wool next the skin; rough home-knitted stockings up to the knees; trousers of stout blue cloth; heavy sea-boots running well up the leg; blue flannel shirts of uncommon

toughness; oilskin overalls,—and this in the height of summer! I smiled at the panoply; but the night was not to be over before I should be envying them every stitch.

Now the fishing began in earnest; chaff ceased, and all grew serious. The loch was a millpond; the moon was not yet up, the water glistening with a dull oily light. We could see the black shapes of boats up and down the loch for a mile and more in this strange glimmer.

"Where'll the whale be noo?" asked Johnstone. He seemed to be the mouthpiece of the crew.

"He's awa doon sooth," said the look-out, the speechless MacBride.

"Aye, that's the way he's workin'," put in the Skipper, and his word was law.

For some time we drifted in dead silence till the Minister pointed quickly; he was an Iona man and had not lost the ear for them. "There's herring out there," he exclaimed in suppressed excitement.

At this there was a stir and eager words. "Aye, aye. But they're in the tide." "The rascals'll no come in." And Johnstone shook a foreboding head. "Was that a whale?" Something had broken up down the loch. "Naw, just a pellock."

"That's the whale noo,—there, he's at the Otter Ferry! And that's the MacGregor's boat."

Confound these MacGregors! Chips of Rob Roy they were sure enough, red as bulls, keen as eagles. They were always where the fish were; when not a boat on the loch but was clean, they had their maize. Well, it was their luck. This was the year of the Red MacGregors; last year our boat was top of the loch; so be it. The fishermen take these changes philosophically. In no race dwells a finer spirit of fellowship; if they get a haul, they say "Very

good," and go cheerily home; if a neighbour gets the fish, there is no growling. The sea is a strange mistress, and her followers are resigned to her caprices.

If you would know to what miraculous delicacy the human ear can attain, you must go to the herring-fishing. Such was the silence that one could hear one's heart beat; and yet the sounds of the deep escaped one, told one nothing. The waters were a blank mystery into which one peered with aching eyes and straining ears. The Skipper, bolt upright at the stern with both hands over his ears, was reading the scarce signs of the sea; the most imperceptible sound, movements wellnigh invisible, were full of meaning for him. He read the face of the waters as one would read a printed page.

By day any fool can tell the herring-shoal when it bursts up like a breaking wave, plain to see, and even by the sprinkled air-bubbles which mark where it rests down below. But go out by starless night when the eyes are useless, with the ear for a guide; what with the ripple of the tide on the boat, the creak of the cordage, the rattle of the tiller, the breaking of wavelets on the rock, the falling of mountain streams into the loch water, the sudden plunges of the porpoise, the dipping of the oars, the far-off sounds of anchors going down, of sails being hoisted, the cries of seabirds, echoes from the shore and the dull mists of the night, could you pick out the rising of a herring or mark the ring left by his nose? The flight of the herring-gull could tell you something by day, but at night if you are quick enough, you catch but the glimpse of a black mass swiftly passing overhead. The whale could tell you something too if you could only see him, but you are not keen enough for that, nor

indeed for anything watermen can sight at the midnight hour. You can hear the blowings of the palloek indeed; you would be stone deaf if you did not catch his lusty plunges. But the fisherman's sense is very finely drawn. A tiny bubble rising from below may even in the dark guide the look-out; the faintest plop conveys a message to his ear.

The herring were out in the tide now; but how they knew that, I could not tell. Yet there they were—gazing eagerly seawards as if marking something.

Suddenly there came a heavy splash to the north. "Mitchell's gettin' a shot." "Aye, aye; pull up, boys."

As we drew near, and the black mass began to define itself, we could hear the shaking of the net and the smiting of the surface that indicated a catch. Presently even a landsman could mark the twittering of the fish as they were tumbled into the hold; it was just like swifts on a June evening.

"How are ye doin', Colin?"

"Middlin'. Big fish here, but ill to get. The half's away."

"That's a peety, Colin."

There was nothing great here; so the boat nosed south again, a soft wind sending us gently along.

"I doot, boys," said the Skipper, "it'll need to be the theatre after all."

After I had entered this theatre and heard the diabolical, piercing, malignant screech of the sternels, I knew where Wagner got the key of his *DIE WALKURE*. A low island ran across a snug bay; this was the concert-hall. The island was carpeted with nests, eggs, and young of the sternel, and the air swarmed like a hailstorm with clashing, squabbling, jealous birds, fighting every inch of space, whose shrill screaming ceased not by day nor night. In the night-

fall it was maddening. You felt as if you were driven to give them back scream for scream, and entering the murderous fray, strike savagely right and left; it was a fitting background for the ravings of a Lear.

There was a good beach for fish in the bay; and my landlubber's nose was not so blunt but I caught a smell of fish in the water, though I could not tell, as our crew could, that it was the gut-herring and therefore not to be touched.

"We'll need to try the ferry, boys," said Johnstone as we swept out fishless.

"I think we will," assented the Skipper; "the whale's doon that way."

The moon was now peeping out shyly like a maid through her curtains. Up went the sail. Boats passed and repassed, all seeking the fish that would not come and be caught. There was no jealousy visible in the fleet. Information and hints were freely asked and generously given. To be sure all hailed from the one port, and I cannot say whether they would have been as free to the men of Tarbert. But here at all events, within the fleet, were no curmudgeons. The ocean herself leads the way; she is free to all her sons.

There was some rude chaff which, rough and jagged as it was, awakened no resentment.

"What are ye sailin' up an' doon for there, Dougal, like a hen lookin' for a nest? Can ye no tell us where the fish is?"

"Aye, aye, lad. The fish is here; but no what I'm wantin'."

"Maybe it's skatefish ye're lookin' for."

"Maybe it is. Have you got anything yourself?"

"Not a haet."

At this confession there was no derision; only a deep "Aye, aye"

came across the water. Unmanly jeering is rare, save among young lads who have not ripened into the full-blown fisher; nor is the rough and ready chaff ever really malicious.

"Is that a torch up the loch?"

Northwards a light shot up in the darkness and flickered over the waters. Then another burst forth, both flaring grandly. Two green lights bore down on the signal. These were the screws to bid for the catch. A take early in the night is a coveted thing.

All eyes were turned patiently to the lights, and though the torches were up at the very place we had left, not a growl escaped their lips. A council of war was inaugurated. Otter Ferry had been drawn blank.

"Well, what is it to be now?"

"I don't know," said the Skipper.

"Will we try the Mull Dhu?"

"I'm quite agreeable," said Mac-Bride, breaking his long silence.

"All right."

A herring-boat is a democratic institution. Every man gives his opinion, and his word will be weighed impartially. The only marks of the ruler here are age and wisdom.

The Mull Dhu was three miles away, which meant some pulling to get there in good time. Our companion boat,—the trawlers work in pairs—followed us unquestioningly. It was a pocket Republic whose affairs were well managed. Given eight cool-tempered, sensible men, patient, cautious, serious, it is easy to form your ideal State on a socialistic basis. Every fishing-crew is one.

Out went the great oars un-murmuringly for the long pull. A good twelve feet they were and for size like young trees. It was now you could see where the fishermen got their brawny frames. Only a powerful man could handle these ponderous blades. The Minister took one and did not so badly; but his thews and

sinews are no ordinary things. Three pulled and one steered. They changed places automatically. In our little Republic all was done harmoniously, silently, perfectly.

It was now, when we glided under the shadow of the Mull Dhu, coming on for two in the morning. Very little of the fishing-night was left; and if we did not catch within the next hour and a half, we might go home to our beds.

Another torch up! this time too at the Otter Ferry, the very place we had rowed from so laboriously. Twice done in one night! Yet nobody spoke.

The sea was grey and ghostly now. Out there were the kelpies, stealing over the face of the waters; great undulating serpents with hideous heads crawled on the surface of the deep; gigantic vague monsters with remorseless tentacles rolled shapelessly out in the mist yonder; nameless things crept to and fro. You did not need an Ossian to spin a Celtic legend here; you felt the gloom in your very bones. The heavy masses of the hills looming black overhead, the grey water shuddering underneath, the shapes that flitted in the air or moved along the deep, the strange cries from the heart of the gloom, formed fit place for uncouth happenings. If Vanderdecken himself had sailed ghost-like out of the greyness, one would not have been afraid; it would have seemed just the right thing. The mystery indeed is why he did not glide forth.

The silent man at the bow straightened himself; he had not spoken since we left Otter Ferry. "Was that the ploutin' o' a herrin'?"

Mark that word *ploutin'*; was there ever a more expressive term? The Minister, who has an etymological weakness, says the word is *ploop*. But *ploop* or *plout*, I care

not; it is just what you do hear when the herring rises.

All ears were bent to the sound. The Skipper gave his verdict. "No, it's just troots playin' in the water. Ho, John—" this to a passing skiff—"have you got a haul to-night?"

"Not wan."

"Ach, ye'll need to play Jock Tamson."

To play Jock Tamson is to lie down to sleep in the boat till the fish come to be caught.

"It's yourself that can do that well."

"What about the time there was a boat left her nets on the Craignare shore? Was it you, John?"

"Aye, aye, it was me," said John sadly, disappearing into the vapour.

There was a quiet chuckle all round at this, in the midst of which the Minister appeared from the cabin to ask what all the noise was for.

"It's the Brochan away by. I was askin' him about the time he broke his nets."

"Is that all? I thought you had landed a load of herring."

"No, no," said Johnstone with a grin, "if there was any herrin' in't, they were frichted away."

It was at this point Neil made his first and only joke that night. "Och yes; it's no ill to hear him when he sleeps." Neil had been so silent, silenter than even the man at the bow, the remark was so quietly humorous, delivered with such sly unction and so unexpected, that the shipload of us roared, the Minister loudest of all. Neil himself shook with silent laughter for the next half hour.

"Has anything been got to-night?" asked the Minister after a bit.

"No much, sir. The Lion's awa' doon sooth by the point there. They say he has a shot." The veracity of their epithets was unerring. The Lion was a truly leonine man.

"I think we'll be shiftin' home now. There's the mornin' comin'."

And to be sure, day was breaking in the north-east and the clouds opening. Away home we went, not doleful, but chastened into subdued cheerfulness. It takes a lot to break a fisherman's heart.

When the last dusk of night was leaving the Mull Dhu, we passed a cove where an old man and a lad in a tarred boat were taking in a net wherein struggled a few silvery fish.

"Mackerel, Peter?" was the cry.

"Aye, aye," came the deep-voiced answer. Old as the man was, the voice was strong as ever. There are white-headed men out in the herring-boats every night and as keen as the young ones.

"He'll need to be quicker than that if he's to catch the IONA."

Mackerel are very ill to take out of the net; they are slippery and have a sharp back fin. It was after five when we pulled slowly into the

bay. Peter was not in till six, and the steamer was away.

"Better luck next time, lads."

"Aye, aye, sir."

No tears were shed over the absence of fish. There might be plenty next night; if not next night, then the next. Hope springs eternal in the fisher's breast. And underneath all is a sturdy fatalism: what use in quarrelling with the inevitable?

The Tarbert men win all the sailing races on the loch.

"How is it," I asked a young fisherman, "you let the Tarbert men beat you?"

"Och sure, the Tarbert men has the best boats."

That was it,—the Tarbert men had the best boats. What more could be said? Nothing could touch that fact. And when we gods came home that morning without the little fishes, I said to myself, "The Tarbert men has the best boats." And it comforted me.

J. SCOULAR THOMSON.

THE ST. LOUIS OF "THE CRISIS."

WHILE coming under the class of fiction, Mr. Churchill's recent novel bases itself frankly upon fact, and makes an exact and detailed use of it. Many, who are but little attracted to him as an original creator, have been fascinated with the story because of its intense realism. *THE CRISIS* is a close study of St. Louis as it existed before and during the Civil War. There are few romances which prepare the reader better for the study of actual memoirs. Take, for instance, General Sherman's two volumes of *Memoirs*, and you will find that, where the *Memoirs* and *THE CRISIS* deal with similar things, they are in almost exact correspondence.

The city where Generals Hancock and Grant found their wives, where General Sherman was a familiar figure for many years and where he lies buried, where General Frémont organised the Western Sanitary Commission, is surely of considerable importance to the student of United States' history. In a critical period it held a cardinal place. Not two hundred miles off is Springfield, Illinois, where Lincoln made his reputation, whence he was called to be President of the United States, and whither he was brought to be buried. Mr. Churchill was well-advised when he took St. Louis and its surroundings as the stage on which the events of his story should happen. It was the place where he lived as a boy, and attended school; and among the elderly gentlemen with whom he was privileged to associate, were several who had played auspicious parts in the war, and had seen

Lincoln and Sherman at highly critical moments. For future historians of the war *THE CRISIS* will remain a valuable book because it contains sketches of the leading actors as they had actually appeared to men of the time who were eminently fitted to judge them, and who gave their impressions in an off-hand way to an eager boy fond of hero-making. There are many vivid and diversified conversations at the back of *THE CRISIS* and its construction. It is reproductive as much as creative.

To come to Mr. Churchill's method: Thackeray is patently his master, in whose steps he diligently essays to follow. Paying minute attention to locality, and introducing as subordinate characters men who were and are in everyone's mouth, he draws a picture of a past period, in which the incidents are threaded like beads on the string of a family history. Colonial and revolutionary times he interpreted through the Carvel family of Virginia; the time of civil war he has interpreted through the St. Louis merchant, Comyn Carvel, a lineal descendant of his earlier hero. Here again he follows Thackeray's hereditary method.

At the time the story opens, in the early Fifties, there was a Southern gentleman in St. Louis, engaged in general business not far from the levee, a widower with a daughter. Mr. James E. Yeatman, son of Thomas Yeatman, a merchant and banker of Nashville, Tennessee, came to St. Louis in 1842, when he had barely passed his majority, and engaged in a general business at Second

and Morgan Streets, in a building still standing. This is the gentleman to whom Mr. Churchill dedicated RICHARD CARVEL, in the following appreciative terms: "To James E. Yeatman, of Saint Louis, an American gentleman whose life is an example to his countrymen." Until 1857 the firm of Yeatman and Robinson continued to carry on business, but it failed to weather the financial crisis of that year. Mr. Yeatman's first wife was Miss Alicia Thompson, of Virginia, and their daughter Alice is still living at Glencoe, a suburban resort about twenty-five miles to the south of the city, which comes frequently into the pages of the story. He owned property in the neighbourhood, and a station on the Missouri Pacific railroad, called Yeatman, bears witness to the fact.

Mr. Yeatman, having early lost his first wife, took for his second partner in life, Cynthia Pope, sister of the general who was expected in 1861 to do great things for the cause of the Union, but whose career was brought to a close by the untoward results of the second battle of Bull Run. The house to which Yeatman brought his wife still stands on the bluff, above what was the old Bellefontaine Road, overlooking meadow-lands that stretch to the big Mississippi river. These lands, once green and decked with flowers, are now disfigured by factories, elevators, and other unsightly constructions. The house, then known as Belmont, now bears the name of the Eddy House, and stands at the corner of Penrose and Eleventh Streets.

Cynthia Yeatman's sister Penelope had been married, early in the Thirties, to a rising young lawyer, Beverley Allen, a Virginian, who had graduated at Princeton, and gone west to push his fortunes. He built a country

house on a bluff a little further to the north than Belmont, and this house is the Bellegarde of *THE CRISIS*. Mrs. Allen's married life lasted but eleven years. In 1845 her husband, who had been visiting Europe, was carried off by cholera at New York. She still survives, in a hale old age.

There were three girls in the Allen family, who were brought up to love and reverence their Uncle Yeatman as a second father. Never was a man more worthy of respect, and never was it more completely given. Always a lover of children, Mr. Yeatman was an ideal of amiability and goodness to his three daughters. One of them, "Puss" Allen as she was called by her intimates, became Mrs. Hall, and the mother of Mabel Hall, now Mrs. Winston Churchill. Another became Mrs. Sturgeon, who now resides in the old house on the bluff. A third, Mrs. Orrick, lives with her mother in the Allens' city residence in Washington and Spring Avenues.

Death came into the families again in 1854, removing Mrs. Yeatman. Her husband gave up a separate suburban establishment and joined forces with his widowed sister-in-law. He was thenceforth intimately associated with the Beverley Allen house. The spacious north-east room became his library, and, as he was an inveterate reader, his constant haunt. Here his body lay on July 8th, when his many friends came to bid him a last farewell and accompany him to the neighbouring cemetery.

Mr. Yeatman, however, is not the Comyn Carvel of the tale, although he furnished material for the description of the character and its surroundings. He is essentially Calvin Brinsmade, the banker, whose town-house was in Olive Street, who attended the Presbyterian church, and who, during the Civil War

became head of the Western Sanitary Commission.

A few years after the dissolution of the firm of Yeatman and Robinson, Mr. Yeatman identified himself with the Merchants' Bank, which he had been instrumental in founding some years previously. Its first location was at the north-west corner of Main and Locust Streets in a building still standing. Afterwards it was moved two blocks west to the north-west corner of Third and Locust Streets, and occupied a building now undergoing a thorough reconstruction; and finally it became the Merchants' Laclede, on the ground floor of the Laclede Building at the corner of Fourth and Olive Streets. For over thirty years Mr. Yeatman was its president.

His town house was in Olive Street, west of Tenth Street, where he owned so many houses on the south side of the street that the place was known as Yeatman's Row. The Row has long ceased to contain residences, and is now given up mostly to piano and furniture stores. The chapter, then, in the first book of *THE CRISIS*, entitled "The Little House," comes as close as possible to reality. A visitor to St. Louis in the Fifties, anxious to find a convenient house, would naturally have applied to a benevolent gentleman with Washington-like nose, who owned several houses in Olive Street, and himself lived in one of them.

The great glory of Mr. Yeatman's career was the prominent and efficient part he took in the organisation and practical working of the Western Sanitary Commission, established in September, 1861, by General Frémont. "The General was a good man," remarks the author of *THE CRISIS* (p. 573), "had he done nothing else than encourage the Western Sanitary Commission, that glorious army of

drilled men and women who gave up all to relieve the suffering which the war was causing. Would that a novel,—a great novel,—might be written setting forth with truth its doings. The hero of it would be Calvin Brinsmade, and a nobler hero than he was never under a man's hand. For the glory of generals fades beside his glory."

In discharge of his benevolent duties Mr. Yeatman went south to the scenes of carnage, and the hostile armies were filled with a new emotion, that of tender compassion, as they witnessed his devoted efforts. About three and a half million dollars in goods, and three quarters of a million in cash were disbursed by this noble institution.

At one time himself a slave-owner, Mr. Yeatman busied himself also with the future of the emancipated negro. The Freedmen's Bureau was organised on a plan devised by him, and in 1865 President Lincoln invited him to become its Commissioner, an offer which he did not see his way clear to accept. Some have called him the John Howard of his generation.

The character of Stephen Brice is composite; but many of the incidents in his life correspond exactly with incidents in the early career of Mr. Henry Hitchcock of St. Louis. Mr. Hitchcock, while of New England stock, was born at Mobile, Alabama, where his father was chief-justice of the State. After studying at Yale, he came west to St. Louis, and was examined for the bar by Hamilton R. Gamble. Like Stephen Brice he made his reputation by an election speech on behalf of Lincoln's candidacy, which was considered a masterpiece of oratory. He was also a constant contributor to the Press, and became in 1857 assistant-editor of *THE ST. LOUIS INTELLIGENCER*.

He did not take part in the war until late in the contest, but yet he saw a good deal of its most stirring incidents. As Sherman's judge advocate he marched with that general to the sea, and was present at the celebrated interview between him and Johnston. It was Major Hitchcock, as we read in Sherman's Memoirs, who was entrusted with the important duty of carrying the despatches to Washington, to place them in the President's hands. Mr. Hitchcock was a member of the same Presbyterian church as Mr. Yeatman, and was associated with him in many ways.

The incident of the forced auction at the Carvel mansion is based on fact. Similar events happened in the case of Mr. McPheeters and of ex-Governor Polk, who lived respectively at Lucas Avenue and Fourteenth Street. Certain of those who chose to bid for the articles offered, and got them at a bargain, contracted no little amount of enduring ill-will.

It is probable that many of the characteristics of the German Richter, who meets with so untimely a death, have their counterpart in the life and personality of Judge Leo Rassieur, a South St. Louis German, who stood up staunchly for the Union in 1861, fought bravely through the war, and now occupies the honoured position of Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic.

General Grant appears in one of the earlier chapters as engaged in the discharge of duties to which he was for some time accustomed. Those years when he tried to make a living out of farming,—selling wood and other produce in the city—were a time of great straitness of finances with him. He left farming for the real estate business, and for a short time the firm of Boggs and Grant had an office in Pine Street, between

Second and Third Streets. This enterprise, in turn, proved unsatisfactory, and he applied for a place in the Customs, then under the direction of an old army acquaintance named Lind, who had served under him as lieutenant in the Mexican War. For two months in the winter of 1859-60 he worked at the Custom House without wages, when the death of Lind prevented his appointment from being ratified. This closed his business career in St. Louis, and he moved north to Ohio, where he lived until the breaking out of hostilities in the following year.

William Tecumseh Sherman was closely connected with St. Louis during the ten years previous to the war; and on April 1st of the eventful year 1861, he came to the city to be president of one of the street-car companies. Before two months were over he had resigned, in order to take command of a regiment, and it was during this stay that the capture of Camp Jackson occurred. The account of the day's doings which Sherman gives in his Memoirs closely corresponds with the account in *THE CRISIS*. He was living at the time in Locust Street, a few doors from the Carvel house of the story, and just one short block north of Yeatman's Row. The company of which he was president was called the St. Louis or Fifth Street, and came to be known later as the Broadway Cable. Its stables were at Bremen, four short blocks from Belmont, and not very far from the Beverley Allen house in Grand Avenue. Here he had an office, where Colonel John O'Fullen, a resident of the neighbourhood, used to visit him. "He daily came down to my office in Bremen," writes Sherman in his Memoirs, "and we walked up and down the pavement by the hour, deploring the sad condition of our country, and the seeming drift

towards dissolution and anarchy." The Fair Grounds lay a short distance inland, and were conveniently placed for the exercise of that hospitality to young officers which Mr. Brinsmade is described in the story as offering so freely.

With the change from steamboat traffic to railroads, St. Louis has left the river-front and pushed inland. Only this year the chief race-course of the city, which was formerly at the Fair Grounds, has been changed to a locality situated seven miles due west

from Main Street, and four miles west of Camp Jackson. The residential houses on the bluffs north and south are survivals of an early time; and the commercial portion of the city, instead of ending at Fourth Street, begins there and extends westward. As described in *THE CRISIS*, the old houses, once centres of life and hospitality, are now dark, dingy and deserted.

JAMES MAIN DIXON.

St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.

PATER'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

"THE perpetuity by generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit, and noble works are common to men; and surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men, who have sought to express the images of their minds where those of their bodies have failed: so the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity."

This saying of Bacon's was never more true than in the case of Walter Pater. *MARIUS THE EPICUREAN* and the unfinished *GASTON DE LATOUR* are in a special and peculiar sense his children, and bear upon them the stamp and impress of heredity more distinctly than is the case with many physical children.

Those who read and admired the earlier work eagerly looked to find in the later an intellectual feast of good things such as its writer knew so well to serve. But, although it may seem ungracious to criticise a mere fragment by one in whose creed beauty of form held so high a place, and who was always so careful in polishing and refining any piece of literature which he voluntarily gave to the public, still we must frankly confess to have found *GASTON DE LATOUR* disappointing, and this in spite of one or two exquisite passages, suggestive of Pater in his happier vein. It is questionable whether it was wise to republish it at all, in view of a reputation already assured and needing nothing that we find in this book to raise it higher.

In choice of subject and method of execution we have in Gaston a feebler

edition of Marius, himself painted in none too brilliant colours. Indeed the later hero (to give him that name) plays an even smaller part than the earlier, and serves but as a peg upon which to hang philosophic apothegms. There is a want of current in the book, amounting almost to stagnation, which causes one to regret that the form of narrative, however slight, was chosen in preference to that of the essay. Could we have had the charming picture of Montaigne's personality, together with the able summary of his philosophy, in the form of an essay, and perhaps another on the interesting Giordano Bruno, we should have had the pith of what is valuable in the book without the introduction of the colourless Gaston, who is after all but the veriest shadow. The fact that Pater should have conceived and partially executed a second book on such closely analogous lines to the first, reflects somewhat upon his originality, and proves the truth of the contention that they are both in a peculiarly close sense his children, bearing the strongest family likeness to him and to each other.

By a closer examination of these two brothers we shall endeavour to draw nearer to the character of the father, and to see the world, for the time being, with his eyes.

And in spite of their clearness of vision and delicacy of perception where beauty was concerned, we must admit that they were short-sighted eyes,—wilfully short-sighted when it was a question of seeing anything offensive or disagreeable. They had

a way (a very pleasant way for their owner) of throwing as it were a golden haze over anything repugnant, extending sometimes even to sin itself, which was apt to be smothered in some such elegantly-turned phrase as the following, taken at random from GASTON DE LATOUR: "Appetite and vanity abounded, but with an abundant, superficial grace. . . . which, as by some æsthetic sense in the air, made the most of the pleasant outsides of life. . . . only blent, like rusty old armour wreathed in flowers," etc.

However valuable this power of artistic selection in smoothing the artist's path through life (and it is unquestionably an attitude of mind to be cultivated, within bounds), it nevertheless, when pushed too far, can become a hindrance to those who would "see life steadily, and see it whole." From the Epicureans of old to the modern Christian Scientists there have been those in every age whose love of ease and pleasantness has led them to seek, in theory at least, to eliminate the evils and the disagreeables from life. Not of the normal, healthy type, these advocates of the pleasant, realising instinctively their inadequate equipment for the battle of life, prefer to expend what little energy they possess in the attempt to cheat themselves into believing that all difficulties are either needless or imaginary, rather than in the effort, natural to the healthy man, to recognise and overcome them.

In Pater's creed beauty is placed above truth, and he therefore lacks the robustness of those saner thinkers who are not hampered by being æsthetes first and philosophers afterwards. There is an element of cowardice almost pathetic in this clinging to the "goodly outside,"—this shrinking from stirring too deeply the abyss below, which is well

indicated in the concluding sentence of GASTON DE LATOUR, the last words which Pater will ever speak to us. He is still considering his favourite theme, the harmonising of discordant elements, the reconciling of good and evil, which is the motive of his most earnest writing, the goal, pursued with passionate longing, of a life of study. And he ends, as he begins, with a question, the form of which is the keynote of his strongest bent. "How could Gaston," he asks, "reconcile the 'opposed points' which to him could never become indifferent, of what was right and wrong in the matter of art?" This indecision, this trick of postulating and leaving unanswered difficult questions, is strongly characteristic. It is, however, the elder of Pater's children that we shall find the family traits most distinctly emphasised.

IN MARIUS THE EPICUREAN we have laid bare to our view the intimate history of the struggles and phases of a lonely soul in search of truth and intellectual peace, together with a masterly summary of the different philosophies and religions which influenced and moulded his mental and spiritual growth. No more interesting theme, within its own line, could have been chosen by any writer, and hardly a more difficult one. And the triumph of Pater lies in the fact that he has done it justice, and has more than succeeded in a field where scarcely another writer of our time could have even ventured to follow. If it be true that a great part of art lies in selection, then the mere selection of this theme and background raises him to a high place among both artists and philosophers.

In the character of Marius Pater has given us a glorified example of the dreamy, contemplative student, a type familiar throughout history; but instead of giving him, as has usually

been done in drama and romance, a secondary part to play while the interest centred in the hero, the man of action, to whom he was but the foil, Pater has raised his student to the first place, and it is in the history of his inner life that we find the heart and essence of this remarkable book.

It is safe to assume that as our culture grows and our experience of life widens and deepens, we become less and less inclined to set up narrow, or even positive, ideals, conformity to which we demand from those to whom we give our admiration and from whom we are willing to learn. Perhaps the only vital test of true living, of the development of character on the right lines, the one way by which we can tell that the waters are sweet and not stagnant, is by the waning of intolerance and the waxing of charity. And we must beware of seeking to find in Marius the traits which could only belong to his anti-type. But even while under the potent charm of Marius as he is, we cannot escape from a disturbing consciousness of his limitations, his inadequacy even to fulfil his own destiny. There is something lacking on the human side to make him convincing as a living personality. We feel that he was old without ever having been young, and that in many senses he never really lived at all.

Were we called upon to criticise, the words *shadowy*, *unreal*, *visionary*, *ineffectual*, would at once rise to our lips. At times we feel almost impatient and inclined to ask when he will come to some decision, when begin to live. He was an intellectual aristocrat, and occupied a stall in the theatre of life which he never left to mingle with the actors. We pine for him to do something, even something wrong; but he remains throughout a sensitive plate,

as it were, an excellent reflector and exponent, but incapable of taking a side and never rising even to the height of pessimism. He never leaves the Happy Valley, never makes the choice of life. He is for ever taking in vague and indefinite impressions, never giving out definite ones. The nearest approach we get to a summing up, a philosophy of life, is in certain rare and ecstatic moods, exquisitely reflected in Pater's ornate prose, in which he receives flashes of the universal harmony and is stirred to his being's depths with the consciousness that in some way he can neither explain nor understand nor even always feel, "all's right with the world." He is a *negative* not a *positive*, to adopt M. Désjardin's classification. His only passion was for truth, and even that towards the end he scarcely hoped to find. He was too delicately responsive to every aspect of beauty, too sensitive to every side of truth, ever to rise to the height of synthesis; too easily penetrated superficially by certain elements of truth to be permeated and possessed by truth as a whole; too much on the look-out for small thrills of joy and beauty to become instinct with its spirit as the main-spring of his life. He was ever searching, never finding, although to say this is only to say that he was a philosopher.

The only fragment of belief in which he found some ultimate comfort was in a variation of Socrates's dæmon,—a spiritual companion ever at hand to counsel and direct the submissive soul, an inner voice of light and leading which is, after all, little more than the glorified conscience of the modern rationalist.

Although so delighting in physical sunshine, spiritually he never rose out of the twilight. It is the beauty of decay, of lingering among tombs that

is wafted to us in the book,—nay more, it is the beauty of death. His negative attitude of tolerance implies a receptivity wide enough to include, as a part of life, even death itself, fusing in the fervent heat of his soul's fire all irreconcilable elements. He was a thinker, a philosopher, a dreamer of dreams,—the very opposite of the modern man. And in nothing is his filial resemblance more marked, for in Pater himself we have an extreme example of the medieval survival in culture.

Marius was not (with all deference to his creator) even an Epicurean, except in that he was more strongly attracted by the tenets of that school than by any other of the philosophic systems of his time. If we consider briefly some of the salient features in this school, we shall readily perceive how great is the discrepancy, even in essentials, between their teaching and the attitude of Marius. The latter, although called an Epicurean, was almost equally attracted by the Stoicism of Marcus Aurelius, and later by the Christianity of Cornelius and Cecilia. The very fact of this susceptibility to other influences differentiates him from the Epicurean of history, whose leading characteristic was an almost servile acceptance of the founder's dogmas. While Platonists, Stoics, and others, grew and developed, Epicureans stood still in superstitious stagnation, the very opposite of Marius, whose open mind can scarcely be denied. Further, the orthodox Epicurean rejected once and for all any concern with death, which for Marius, as we have seen, always possessed a peculiar fascination.

Again, Epicurus lived in the present and enjoyed the *here* and *now*, while Marius never could shake off the influence of the past. Instead of possessing his past, he was rather

possessed by it, and this to an almost unhealthy extent. It was for ever coming and laying its ghostly finger upon him, preventing him from adequately realising and participating in the present.

Epicurus too, was more robust, more democratic even than Marius, as in his view of pleasure there was room for the poor, if just and wise, while for Marius beauty in externals was a necessity. He enjoyed high thinking but not plain living, and his view of the simple life was a comprehensive one. He bid his disciples avoid all culture, and condemned æsthetic discussions as only fit for sensitive and sentimental souls. Marius, as we know, was deeply cultured and delighted in dialectic.

In yet another respect do we find that Marius falls short of the Epicurean standard. Epicureanism approaches closely to rationalism in that the trained sage has acquired the power of discrimination between real and apparent pleasures, and almost instinctively rejects the latter without regret. Only the learners were troubled by conscious difficulty of choice, and in this Marius never completed his novitiate. He was, as we have seen, ever distracted by the difficulty of choice, of decision, by his morbidly acute perception of the friction in life,—the painful effort to reconcile life as he found it with the beautiful inner life that he would fain have lived, undisturbed by conflict with hard realities. His failure to find the harmony for which he longed, or to solve in any way satisfactory to himself the problem of good and evil is accountable for the tragedy of his life; and that, in its lack of work done and dearth of even definite philosophical conclusions, we cannot but feel to have been greater than the tragedy of his death, in which the writer appears to see a sort of atone-

ment in the sacrifice of his life for his friend. He died, however, as he had lived, and the beauty of the sacrifice is marred by the fact (artistically in accordance with his characteristic indecision) that it was the outcome of mere accident, and the direct result of his way of drifting with the tide and offering no resistance to circumstances. Although we are distinctly given to understand that he did not afterwards regret the consequences of his inaction, it yet renders the sacrifice a negative rather than a positive virtue.

In perhaps nothing else was Marius so Epicurean as in this very quality of passiveness. The teacher's conception even of pleasure was negative, and consisted rather in the absence of pain than in any active enjoyment. It was essentially a middle-aged philosophy; there was no room for action or growth, and therefore none for youth in such a system. It was a state of blessedness that was sought,—to be, not to do. In estimating and attempting to understand the Epicurean point of view we have perhaps failed to take sufficiently into account the feeble health of Epicurus himself, more especially as it influenced his definition of pleasure, which must in every case of necessity be co-terminous with the capacity of the subject.

Pater, too, was the victim of delicate health, which he has, perforce, transmitted to his children. He was so far removed from the healthy human type,—he touched life himself at so few points—that the power to generate such a type was inevitably out of his reach.

What then, makes the charm of this book, and what, if anything positive, can we learn from the gentle, ineffectual Marius?

First, it is one of the few books of our time which possesses an atmo-

sphere of its own. It has a rich, original flavour as of old wine. With its beautiful historic setting, its local colour, its stateliness and distinction of style, the soothing serenity of its gentle flow, it is of especial value to us in these days of crudity and hurry. Instinct not with the spirit of our age but with the breath of long ago, it supplies a needed antidote to our over-civilisation. As we follow Marius in his external life and are companions of his walks about the Rome of Marcus Aurelius in the early dawn of the Christian Era, as well as in his spiritual progress, we feel that in both senses it is good for us to be here. There is in the book a freshness as of early morning,—as if the writer had been able to arrest and make his own the glory of those morning hours of golden sunshine in which Marius so delighted to steep both body and spirit, and in which he could do his best intellectual work.

If Marius has no direct achievement, no definite advice to offer us, we can yet learn much by implication from the story of his life. We can learn the danger of regarding one's own personality as the pivot of the Universe, of this perpetual "inspection of our own mental secretions." We can learn the truth of the German proverb, *Probiren geht uber studiren*, that it is better to stand forth and take one's place bravely in the battle of life, willing to share both pleasure and pain, and that it is sometimes, nay always, wiser to take a side, even though it be the wrong one, than to squander intellectual power in the attempt to cheat oneself into believing that inaction is better than the risk of possible or even probable mistakes.

Also we can learn not to expect too much of life. Both Epicurus and Marius fell into the fatal error of imagining that pleasure and not work,

not the building of character, should be man's goal. They attempted to build upon a rotten foundation, a fabric of dreams; what wonder that they found therein no rest or abiding peace? They failed to recognise that pleasure is but an incident in life,—“a bounty of Nature, a grace of God”—and that in making it the conscious aim they robbed it of its delicate bloom and lost its essence, which must consist not merely in the absence of pain, but in the healthy reaction from work done.

Beyond the acquisition of knowledge Marius never did any work, and for neglecting a law of Nature he paid the penalty in a starved emotional life and the incapacity for other than tepid sensations. He never attained even to the unconscious, impulsive action of the healthy man. He well illustrates the extreme academic attitude, which is a paralysing one. While perhaps the average healthy man thinks too little, Marius proves that there is such a thing as thinking too much, and that there exist certain speculative *cul-de-sacs* which in the world of thought occupy much the same position that perpetual motion and flying-machines have hitherto held in the world of matter. The intellectual life must justify itself by at least some measure of practice; otherwise we have but one-sided development; there are but drones in

the hive. The self-conscious are not those upon whom we can depend for our best work, and what a sad prospect for the race if we had many Mariuses among us!

But we must not forget that he, like us all, was the victim of circumstance. It was his misfortune never to be forced into contact with the realities of life. Had he travelled, had he married, or, above all, had it been necessary for him to earn his bread, he would have been a thousand times the gainer, and his ripe scholarship and rich artistic nature might have blossomed and borne fruit.

But in spite of all that he lacked there is yet about him a gentle dignity, a power through repose which binds us to him with a subtle spell, and makes us feel that his failure was not his own fault so much as the inevitable issue of his too sensitive nature, and that, being Marius, and Pater's child, he could not have been other than he was. His scorn for dogma and his open mind alike command our respect, while we recognise and regret that his possession of the faults of these very qualities hindered any result in action or conduct. Perhaps he showed true greatness in his perception that no single philosophy or religion can be more than an arc in the circle of truth.

F. E. H.

WHERE THE PELICAN BUILDS ITS NEST.

THE sun shines on no more desolate or dreary country than the Great Never Never Land of Australia, whose grim deserts have claimed many a victim to the cause of knowledge.

The explorer's life in these deadly solitudes is not one of many pleasures. Rather do unpleasant possibilities for ever obtrude upon his weary brain, until he is well nigh distraught, or at least reduced to a morbid state of melancholy in keeping with his miserable surroundings. Little wonder is it that disaster so often attends the traveller in those lonely lands. The strongest will becomes weakened by the insidious influences of the country, and the most buoyant spirit is quickly dulled. All Nature seems to conspire against him. The stunted mulga and mallee shrubs afford no welcome shade; they dot the sand-wastes in monotonous even growths, and the eye is wearied by their everlasting motionless presence. The saltbush clumps and spinifex patches conceal hideous reptiles. Snakes and centipedes crawl across the track; scaly lizards, venomous scorpions, ungainly bungarrows, and a host of nameless pests are always near to torture and distract. Even the birds are imbued with a profound solemnity that adds still more to the wanderer's depression. The pelican stands owlshly in his path as if to guard from intrusion its undiscovered home; the carrion-crow with its ominous scream is for ever circling overhead; and the mopoke's dull monotone is as a calling from a shadowy world.

With this introductory apology, as it were, for my plainly written narrative, I give you a story of travel, a note from a wanderer's log, a mere incident of many, from that land of interminable sand-wastes.

We were three months out on an expedition from Kalgoorlie to the Gulf country, and fortune had been friendly during that time, leading us to claypans, native wells, and water-holes, opportunely as our store of the precious fluid gave out. Our course was as a triumphal march, and my old comrade, Mac, who had often endured the horrid pangs of thirst in similar tracts, shook his head doubtfully at our good luck. "We'll hae tae suffer for this yet," he would say, and I could not but think there might be truth in the words.

My party consisted of four in all; Phillip Moresby, a young Cambridge graduate, was the geologist and my right-hand man. Mac and Stewart were two muscular Scotsmen who had served me in good stead on many previous journeys. They were imbued with the dare-devil spirit of the rover and were content to follow, or, as they put it, to "risk their carceeses," wherever I might lead.

Our equipment was dangerously simple; five pack horses and two camels bore our complete outfit, and considering that our mining implements included a boring-plant and "dolly" arrangement, it may be understood that the necessaries of life were cut down to a minimum.

The two best horses, Sir John and Reprieve, carried the bulky water-bags only; the others,—poor

miserable specimens of horseflesh, emaciated and worn by their long march and never varying diet of spinifex and saltbush-tips — paced wearily on with jolting burdens of tinned meats (*tinned dog* in the bushman's vocabulary), flour and extracts, — the sum total of the explorer's needs.

The camels were strong and wiry. Slavery had been with me on a former expedition; we knew his powers to a nicety, and he never failed us. Misery was a young and fiery bull that needed much watching. He was rather vicious and surly, and not infrequently had to be coaxed along by the aid of nose-tweezers; yet he was a powerful and enduring animal, and bore his burden well, if less patiently than his neighbour.

On the morning of August 22nd, 1898, we were camped in latitude $26^{\circ} 37' 43''$, longitude $128^{\circ} 9' 7''$, by the side of a much evaporated soak — the residue of a previous rainfall, but how long previous was beyond conjecture.

We had reached the eastern limit of our march and found no auriferous country. Phil, it is true, had accumulated a collection of water-worn coloured pebbles which he fondly called rubies, and his joy was shared by Mac and Stewart who swore by Phil's knowledge. I called his specimens garnets, worth, perhaps, a few shilling an ounce, but then, my experience was general and at best but superficial, and I did not trouble my head about the specific gravity, which factor was the all important one to Phil. However, at this camp we held a council to decide the course of our further journeyings. The country in the vicinity was a vast rolling plain strewn with ironstone rubble and conglomerate boulders; but in the far eastward distance a

dim hazy outline seemed to interrupt the horizon's even curve, and I noted in my log-book: "Viewed at a distance of about twenty miles mountain range, apparently basalt formation, sides precipitous, district rolling sand plain."

We named the soak Doubtful Water, which title had a double significance; it could not be relied upon to retain its fluid contents, and it also, in a sense, described our plans at that time, for they were very doubtful indeed.

Our expedition had been undertaken in the hope of acquiring geographical knowledge of an unknown tract of country; but then, like many others, I had dreamed of flowing rivers and beautiful green valleys, grassy downs and luxurious forests. I had hoped also to encounter auriferous country, which was my reason for transporting unwieldy machinery over those barren sands. To be strictly truthful, I should say that it was really the supposed Eldorado of the Interior that had been my visionary incentive.

And now we had travelled across country full five hundred miles, to find only sand and spinifex, saltbush and mallee scrub, ironstone rubble, and barren quartz boulders! My disappointment was keen, and Mac did not improve my good temper when he caustically asked, "An' whaur's the land o' promise noo?" I looked at the camels listlessly chewing the fibrous ends of saltbush clumps, then at the skeleton frames of the horses as they lay gasping in the sand, too weary to eat. "You've got the rubies, Mac," I said quizzically; "what more do you want?"

"We'll shift our course to northward, boys," I said that evening, as we gazed at each other through the smoke of our camp-fire. "Hang it all," said Phil, who was youthful and

enterprising, "won't you let us have a look at the mountains?" "Mountain be jiggered," muttered Stewart; "A dinna want another spike in the back." He referred to a previous experience of his when in the vicinity of the Leopold Mountains in the North-West.

"There is not much to be gained so far as I can see," I answered. "The natives will probably be numerous, and as a matter of course, unfriendly—" "But the formations?" interrupted Phil eagerly. "Basalt, or diorite, or sandstone — nothing gold-bearing," I replied rather sharply. I had mapped out a course at the start in which the 128th degree of longitude was to be the extent of our easting; we had arrived at that bearing now, and having encountered nothing but the most miserable sand-country, there was certainly little encouragement to proceed.

However, Phil was most anxious to explore the shadowy ranges; he had never seen a mountain in West Australia before, he explained. Mac and Stewart now supported his wish with much ingenious argument, the latter having apparently forgotten his prejudices in that direction, and in a weak moment I consented to their entreaties.

An extract from my log dated August 23rd, 1898, reads as follows: "Decided to explore mountain on horizon. Started 9 a.m. Course due East. Slavery and Misery shaping well, but horses failing rapidly." Before we had gone ten miles one of the horses had to be shot; it was literally too weak to stand, and the poor brute's agony was being but needlessly prolonged. Slavery received much additional burden in consequence, but he merely looked sorrowfully at me as I pulled on his saddle-ropes, and continued his melancholy march.

As we approached our new objective, the country gradually became altered until when within a few miles of the mountain, the surface appeared strewn with great ironstone boulders of peculiar shape; and deep dry ravines, half filled with iron-sand silt, tore up the ground in long parallel courses.

It was indeed a strange sight and I marvelled greatly at the extraordinary geological features shown. But we were yet to be more surprised; as we neared the base of the mountain, that now presented to us a face of somewhat precipitous ascent, great "blows" of basalt rock reared high above the ground, and deep pit-like cavities penetrated the iron formations, marking a semi-circular line of indentations. And in these strange craters a greenish yellow fluid seethed and foamed, sending up thin columns of pungent blue vapour that rose through the quivering heat-haze and dissolved high above our heads. Phil's explanation of the phenomenon was elaborate and by no means uninteresting. He analysed the fluid and found it to be essentially salt, yet holding in solution much iron and a considerable percentage of copper. The cauldrons, however, varied considerably in size as in the nature of their contents. In some the liquid literally boiled, and surrounding these a thick crust of salt and lime heightened the pit-levels several feet. Others maintained merely a tepid heat, and they were proved to contain much less foreign matter than their near neighbours; their depths, also, averaged but nine feet, as against a sounding of twenty-seven feet obtained in the hottest and widest cavity.

We camped alongside the least odoriferous of the cauldrons, and now a serious difficulty arose; there was here not even the much maligned

saltbush to provide feed for our weary beasts; not even a thorny patch of spinifex could be seen. Far up on the mountain side, a scraggy forest of stunted Eucalypti found root, but no other form of vegetation was in sight. Our camp was fixed on a solid iron base.

"The puir animiles canna eat iron-stane," said Mac, sorrowfully surveying the scene. "They'll have to fast again, to-night," I replied; "we'll see what can be done in the morning." The poor brutes had fasted so often before that they seemed to have grown quite accustomed to the ordeal; and only sniffed at the sand dejectedly, before laying their tired bodies down to rest.

On the following morning we prepared to thoroughly explore the mountain. This was not to be such an easy process as we imagined, for its extent was much greater than we had at first calculated. It stretched backwards for a considerable distance, presenting to the north and south a saddle-back ridge connecting two dome-like elevations. On the side on which we were camped masses of ironstone rubble banked the base to a considerable height, and extended far out into the plains. From our tent the ascent rose very gradually for a long distance, then sharply rising it culminated in one of the great domes. The lower altitudes were thinly feathered by mallee shrubs and a few sandalwood bushes, but higher up the solid rock appeared, gaunt and bare.

We hobbled the horses and camels and turned them loose to graze on any vegetable growth they might find, which by the appearance of the country promised to be rather an unsatisfactory quest. Then we set off on our journey of discovery.

Stewart carried the water-bag, filled with distilled fluid from one of the

cauldrons. Mac bore a lengthy coil of rope on his shoulders, to be used in case of emergency, and he also gripped tightly his double-barrelled breech-loader. Phil burdened himself with a pick and a prospector's hammer, for tapping the rock and obtaining samples. I carried only my sextant and my rifle; the former instrument is indispensable to the traveller, the latter is always useful. And so off we went, never dreaming of disaster, without even a piece of damper in our pockets. We were not used to mountaineering in West Australia.

Half an hour's labour brought us to the belt of scrub; and now we saw that the ascent of the mountain was to be no child's play, for the summit towered yet high above us.

As we passed through the leafless forest, which formed no shade yet obscured our vision, a little incident occurred that altered the whole day's plans, and entirely changed the object of our excursion. Stewart, who bore the heaviest load, came last, and we had barely penetrated midway through the brush when he bellowed out, "A crocodile, Phil, a crocodile!"

Phil turned with alacrity, as did we all; and Mac nearly strangled himself in his endeavours to extricate his neck from the cumbrous coil of rope, that he might level his gun at the monster. Stewart had fallen considerably to the rear, and when we returned we found him madly floundering through the brush, in the wake of an enormous bungarrow, that flopped its ungainly limbs energetically in its endeavours to escape. A bungarrow, I should mention, is a fearsome looking animal, half reptile half saurian, that has its home in the desert interior. Its body underneath is of a dirty yellow colour, similar to the ironstone sand; and its back is sheathed in horny scales that easily deflect a bullet. The mouth is enor-

mous, as is also the tail which tapers to a very fine point. Altogether Stewart's exclamation, — "a crocodile"—described the appearance of the animal sufficiently well.

"Take care, Stewart," I warned; "if he bites, you won't forget it in a hurry."

"Nae fear o' that," he shouted back, and disappeared after his elusive prey, closely followed by Mac, who made repeated efforts to sight his blunderbuss on the brute, but without avail.

Phil and I waited for some considerable time for the return of the adventurers. To such a level does Australian travel reduce the mind, that I fear we were speculating whether that bungarrow would be edible! The merciless sun, however, soon brought our thoughts back to us; we were absolutely melting.

"What *has* become of those beggars?" said Phil, irritably. At that moment a loud report crashed through the air, causing even the twigs to quiver, and died away in long trembling waves of sound. We waited expectantly, but no voices heralded our companions' return. Soon another report thundered along the mountain side, and I groaned in despair. "They are bushed, Phil," I cried, "and we cannot locate the sound." Hastily I discharged my rifle in the hope that Mac's sharp ears would catch the first decisive, penetrating report of the exploding cordite, before the mountain drowned it in reverberating echoes. But it was in vain; rarely indeed can sound be located in such circumstances. The sharp crack of a rifle is eclipsed by the rolling echoes that follow, and the point of discharge can at best be but a dangerous guess. From our present altitude we could trace the flat expressionless desert fading away in the distance. We had rounded a bluff in our ascent, and so were

debarred a view of our camp; and this fact would seriously confuse the wanderers.

We heard no more shots, and concluded that the bungarrow-hunters had realised the hopelessness of signalling in such a manner.

"I guess," said Phil, "we'll move upwards; we may see them from the top." I had not thought of that,—as I have said, prolonged incarceration amid the sand-plains does not sharpen the intellectual faculties. "Mac and Stewart have probably sufficient sense to do likewise," I answered, much relieved, and we renewed our march. A little later it was borne upon us abruptly that the water-bag as well as Stewart had disappeared. We had both acquired thirsts of elaborate proportions, and we cursed Stewart and his crocodile heartily.

The sharp edges of the ironstone rubble cut deeply into our much worn boots, and lacerated our feet. I had not reckoned on this; and when we emerged into the open, and clambered over the bare rocks that were hot as Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, I determined in future to strictly forbid mountain-exploration in West Australia.

After another hour of acute effort we drew ourselves painfully to the top of the dome-like culmination, and looked on the other side. A wilderness of dwarfed Eucalypti met our gaze, stretching far into the flats below; the mountain fell away in a gentle slope,—so different from the heights we had scaled—and merged into the plains many miles beyond. Numerous gullies, once cleft by rushing torrents, marked the trend of the land; and where these ancient river-channels united, a clump of lime-trees flourished, denoting clearly a water-bearing area of generous kind.

As we looked, several thin wisps of

smoke appeared, curling lazily up into the sky. The fires had evidently just been lighted.

"Natives," said Phil, laconically; and indeed there was little occasion to doubt the unmistakable evidences of the Aborigine.

"I hope they are not numerous," I said anxiously, knowing from experience that a few natives are always easily handled, whereas a tribe are almost invariably aggressively disposed to the stranger. We withdrew ourselves quickly from our lofty perch, and a strange sight we must have looked to those poor nomads, as we stood outlined against the clear blue sky.

About fifty feet on the right side of the dome, towards the saddle-back ridge, Phil noticed a peculiar break in the iron crust, and he picked his steps cautiously forward to obtain a few samples from the rock. Our enthusiasm had cooled considerably. The mountain certainly afforded indications that in other circumstances would have at once commanded our closest attention. But now I scanned the hill-side anxiously for trace of my lost comrades, and revolved in my mind the awkward probability of our horses and camels being stolen by the natives in our absence.

Phil reached the outcrop, and after giving a few preliminary taps on the surface, I was surprised to see him disappear beneath two great over-hanging ledges. They evidently formed a kind of cave, and once inside, Phil's mallet resounded vigorously. Suddenly, I heard him give a yell of delight, but at the same time my ears caught the dim echoes of Mac's gun. I looked all round; nothing was in sight on our side of the mountain, the camp being still hidden by a tantalising bluff. I scrambled up the dome's smooth surface, and looked on the northward

slope. Instinctively my eyes sought the native camp sheltered among the limes. A heavy pall hung above the trees, the result of the numerous fires now alight. I could distinguish the dancing flames, and here and there a black form showed clearly against them, but nothing further appeared to disturb the peace of the landscape.

I turned away, feeling somewhat disconcerted at the prolonged absence of my sturdy henchmen. Never before had they been left entirely to their own resources, and though they were both well-proved bushmen, I could not but feel anxious for their welfare.

Before I could descend from my perch, Phil clambered up beside me. In his hand he carried a ragged piece of rusty ironstone quartz. "What do you think that is?" he enquired with elation.

"Rather barren-looking stuff," I replied, turning it over carelessly. Then I noticed a seam of sparkling yellow; eagerly I held the specimen to the light, and examined it closely; the vein was clear and distinct; it was assuredly gold. I tried the knife-test, and was convinced; the yellow metal was soft and ductile.

"Well, it's not pyrites this time!" spoke Phil triumphantly.

"No," I replied; "you've got the genuine article now, and no mistake. It should be worth more than the rubies."

Another loud report boomed up towards us, and Phil's sharp eyes at once detected the smoke of the discharge. "Why, they are on the wrong side of the mountain!" he cried. The puff of smoke yet lingered over the tops of the mallee scrub about half a mile beneath us, and soon I could descry the waving branches that betokened the approach of the wanderers. We watched closely. Sometimes Stew-

art's helmet would show through the sparse brush, only to disappear again as the vegetation became more dense. What they were doing on that side of the hill, I could not imagine. They seemed to be making rapid progress, but strangely enough were rounding the base of the summit. Evidently they had not noticed us.

At length they came to a clear patch of rocky ground, and we saw to our astonishment that they were running.

"What on earth is the matter with them?" cried Phil in wonderment, his newly discovered gold-mine being for the time completely forgotten. I unslung my rifle, and sent three dum-dums crashing into space. The runners came to a halt, and looked all round. Then they must have seen us,—and at our lofty eminence, we could hardly have escaped notice, had they looked up earlier; their course veered, and without stopping a moment they charged wildly towards us.

And now a startling sight appeared that elicited a yell of horror from Phil, and caused me again to hurriedly unstrap my rifle. Less than two hundred yards behind our companions, about a score of stalwart natives came bursting through the bush in hot pursuit. We had not noticed them before because of their similarity in colour to the scraggy brushwood; but as they bounded into the open, their black bodies showed up clearly against the dull brown ironstone rock. That they were on the track of Mac and Stewart, and with hostile intent, was obvious. Some had spears, but the majority of the warriors carried only their waddies, or clubs; they were rapidly gaining on the fugitives, and those with spears were even preparing to discharge them. Mac was labouring heavily under his coil of rope, and

his gun was clutched to his side. Stewart still gripped his water-bag, and sped along behind his more portly fellow-fugitive. There was no time for consideration; hastily I slid the sighting-bar of my rifle to six hundred yards, and peering along the barrel, fired, so as to strike the ground in front of the oncoming horde. A cloud of sand flew up from the decayed rock, a few yards ahead of the foremost native, showing where the ball had struck, but though the pursuers seemed bewildered, they continued their rush. Again I fired, again and again until the air rent and quivered with the mighty echoes that thundered out. The fugitives were within three hundred yards of us, and a faint cheer floated up the hill, showing how truly they appreciated my diversion.

"Drop the coil, Mac!" shouted Phil. "Leave the water-bag, Stewart!" His instructions, however, were not heard or wilfully disobeyed, but the ardour of the pursuit was cooled; the warriors hesitated when two of their number dropped struck by a ricochet bullet. They had seen no spear or boomerang hurtling through the air, and could not understand such tactics. Another fusilade completed their demoralisation, and they turned and fled, dragging their wounded brethren after them by the hair of the head.

A few minutes later, Mac struggled up the rocky elevation on which we stood, and Stewart followed close after.

"A've never run like that frae ony man," spluttered Mac, as he crawled towards us on hands and knees; and his compatriot behind gave a deep grunt of sympathy. "If the black deevils wad only fight fair," continued Mac indignantly, as he rose to his feet, "we wad hae had a tussle for it."

"Nae mair spikes in the back fur me," groaned Stewart, breathing heavily as he swarmed up the rock.

Then before I could question them in any way, they stood together, and glaring towards their late pursuers, hurled out imprecations strange and sulphurous.

Meanwhile Phil silently picked up the water-bag which Stewart had deposited, and inverting it over his head gulped down great mouthfuls of the contents. He suddenly checked himself, however, and throwing down the bag, gasped and choked, and finally spat out several small stones. I looked at him in amazement, but Stewart, who had heard the gurgling sound, astonished me more; checking his flow of expletives, and with a look of horror on his face, he seized the water-bag. "Ye've swallowed ma rubies," he howled, and Mac who had discharged his final imprecation at the enemy, turned abruptly, and lifted up his voice in a wail of sympathy. "The rubies an' ma puir wee iguana," he said sorrowfully. Phil had now recovered himself, and picking up the small stones, he handed them to Stewart without comment. Explanations followed, and the experiences of the adventuresome pair were detailed with telling force.

"We lost the bungarrow," began Mac; "it ran in between twa rocks, an' only left its tail sticking oot, an' we pu'd an' pu'd at that but he was ow'r muckle for us"—here he paused to sigh regretfully, then continued his narrative.

It appeared that when they had realised themselves bushed, they kept moving along the belt of scrub in the hope to come upon us, and unknowingly had travelled right round the mountain. They had found the rubies in one of the dry gullies that ran towards the native camp, and in their zeal to obtain a good collection had

followed the old channel's course in the direction of the lime-trees, into the midst of the Blacks' domain. The result was as we had witnessed.

"We pit the rubies in the bag," said Stewart, "for we had nae other place tae carry them."

"I can understand why you held on to the bag," Phil said; "but Mac's reason for treasuring the heavy rope is beyond me."

"We hiv'na another rope in camp," said Mac shortly, which showed that that worthy gentleman had considered the future, even while he fled before the blood-thirsty natives.

Without further delay we began the descent, Phil having tapped off a number of specimens from his discovery which Mac and Stewart eagerly carried. "What wi' gold an' rubies an',—an' niggers," said the latter, "we should surely be content noo."

Carefully we slid down the rocky surfaces, and gingerly we trod over the glass-edged rubble. Then we entered the shadeless forest where the bungarrow-hunters had begun their eventful day's experiences, and with hurried steps steered towards the bluff that divided us from our camp.

I was not altogether unprepared for further trouble, and thus when we reached the headland, I viewed almost with indifference the extraordinary appearance of the ground we had vacated but a few hours previously. Around each cauldron several natives were disporting themselves, while our tent was surrounded by many inquisitive gins (women), who each in turn took a hasty peep within. I looked abroad, and far in the distance could see our beasts of burden manœuvring about in the vain effort to obtain some edible substance from the barren sands; and I heaved a sigh of relief when I saw that there were no Blacks in their vicinity.

"What are we going to do now?"

spoke Phil, after a considerable silence.

"A dinna ken what *you're* gaun tae dae," grimly said Mac, cocking his gun, "but a'm fur nae mair rinning awa'."

"There is little need for you to worry, Mac," I answered; "I don't think there is any fight in them." It suddenly had dawned upon me that the cauldrons might be the supposed dwellings of the natives' gods, Bilya-Backan or Piama. In that case nothing was more likely than that the Blacks should hold their fantastic ceremonials here; and the fact that the tent was unmolested gave credence to my surmise.

Without further hesitation we advanced beyond the bluff and strode slowly down the hill-side. I had no intention, however, of approaching within spear's throw of the warriors should they be disposed to await our arrival, as such a course would have been flatly suicidal; but as I anticipated, there was little cause to be alarmed.

Immediately the women saw us they gave vent to their terror in shrill cries; the men glanced up from their orgies, then broke into confusion and fled precipitately, followed by their noisy consorts.

"It's your turn noo, ye deevils," bellowed Mac triumphantly after them.

My little tale is at an end. It is one of the least dreary episodes of my West Australian experiences; and though the rubies were after all only garnets, and the gold-bearing rock of too refractory nature to be of any commercial value, even if transport could have been arranged, still our mountain-exploration had proved a genuine diversion. It had broken the dreary routine of our journeyings, and uplifted our thoughts from the endless wastes.

We renewed our march next morning, heading due north, but it was eight months later when we reached the coast beyond the Leopold Mountains,

ALEXANDER MACDONALD.

THE BRITISH OFFICER AND HIS FOREIGN CRITICS.

PERHAPS the most annoying spirit evoked by the present war in South Africa is that which accords a ready credence to any incident tending to reveal incompetence or stupidity in the ranks of our officers and men. Fortunately these well abused individuals as a body are absolutely indifferent to popular praise or blame; but this want of confidence constitutes a very serious danger for this country in the event of complications nearer home. The price of Consols, and ultimately the stability of every business in England, depends on the national belief in the success of our arms whether on land or sea. If, therefore, in a great European war the same ready acceptance should be accorded to every wild misstatement as to the handling and efficiency of our forces, the nation will learn to its cost the evils this attitude of mind will entail, and the danger that such a state of military ignorance, which alone renders this panic-telegraphy possible, may create for this country.

Now that trustworthy information is beginning to filter homewards, I find, as I expected from the first, that in comparison to those of other nations the British staff and regimental officers stand very creditably indeed.

It seems to be universally imagined that a people can be transferred from a state of peace to one of war by the mechanical operation of pressing an electric button, and that forthwith armies and fleets are set in motion and reach their appointed positions by a perfect mechanical system. But you have only to realise that the pressure of the telegraph-key frees not

only the electric current, but the fears, hopes, and passions of millions of men and women, and that these important factors are not so easily controlled as the actual movements of those detailed to fight, to understand how difficult it is to maintain the absolute mechanical precision of pace and execution.

At the first word of the outbreak of war the craziest rumours abound. Men see fleets massing where no ships could possibly appear, and even the glint of a couple of mower's scythes has ere now been magnified into the flashing sabres of a division of cavalry. That these are not assertions as wild as the rumours I deprecate I have only to draw on German experiences, for example, to prove. It has always been taught that the concentration of the German army at the beginning of hostilities in 1870 was a model for all time, and relatively it certainly was far better than anything of the kind that had ever been achieved before. That it will be immeasurably superior the next time that Germany goes to war there can be no doubt; but as the element of human nature will always prevail, the same essential mistakes will again occur, and when the true history of any future European struggle comes to be written, I venture to predict that our "stupid" officers will have as little reason to dread the comparison then, as they have now when contrasted with the Germans in 1870.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the problem of concentrating a huge army on a well defined land-frontier which has been fought over

for generations, and which is approached by a network of roads and railways whose carrying capacities can be calculated to a fraction, is of infinitely greater simplicity than the transfer of even a moderate force across six thousand miles of sea and one thousand miles by land into an unsurveyed and, in part, almost uninhabited country. Von Moltke was well aware of the difference when on one occasion he defended the British army against some disparaging critic by the remark, that English officers did not go to the front in first-class carriages.

Then again, it is not difficult in dealing with a regular army, whose capability for operations has been demonstrated in many campaigns, to predict its probable rate of movement and obvious aims; hence no one could be surprised that the broad plan of preliminary deployment was well and truly drawn up in Berlin in 1868.

But, considering the facilities of daily intercommunication which existed between Germany and France, it is nothing less than astonishing that the army as a whole was so badly informed as to the rottenness of the French military machine, which rottenness was bound to frustrate the vigorous offensive so feared by the Germans, and to meet which their elaborate plan of deployment had been calculated. The explanation of this omission lies deep in human nature, which is much the same in Prussia as in Great Britain. The officers on the spot had put off to a more convenient season the purchase of maps of their own garrisons, and the study of the printed matter available about their possible enemy.

According to the Headquarters' plan of deployment the troops coming from the interior of Germany were to be detrained and collected in army-corps and armies at stations some

three to four marches within the frontier, at points, that is to say, which the enemy could not by any possibility reach first.

I need only say in passing of this arrangement, which was duly and punctually carried out (every regiment having received a carefully drawn up time-table for road and rail), that though the capacities of the railways had been calculated at the low figure of twenty-four trains a day for double lines, and twelve for single, yet the whole elaborate scheme broke down in the first twenty-four hours, and that thenceforth the movement had to be carried out from hand to mouth, on the principle of first come, first served. This rate of dispatch excited the scorn of our own managers of railway-traffic, who even in those days were capable of handling one hundred and twenty trains a day over a double line.

Seven years later in India our single line railways, in spite of the disadvantages of native signallers, plate-layers, &c., and the long continuance of the strain on their resources, contrived to beat even the best of the German records in the railing of troops to the front.¹

The chief interest, however, in the way of blunders centres in what occurred in the frontier districts while the armies were massing, and where a French inroad was possible at almost any moment.

Owing to the constitution and distribution of the German army it was impossible to hold the whole of the frontier in force; but it was inadvisable to sacrifice territory without at least the show of defence, and also it is a military maxim, based on long

¹ So far as my information goes the 3 ft. 6 in. Cape and Natal single lines have also beaten them, over curves and gradients more severe than anything in Germany.

experience, to gain touch of your enemy as quickly as may be, and never to allow him to escape from under observation again.

Accordingly the few troops actually along the border were not withdrawn inland, but were left to be used as feelers, with directions to fall back only before superior forces. The whole line to be guarded was eighty-five miles in extent, fairly open rolling ground from Sierck on the Mosel to near Saarbrück; thence it rose into forest-clad mountains for about sixty miles to Weiszenburg, and from there across an undulating wooded plain to the Rhine.

To watch the whole extent of country there were only twelve squadrons of cavalry and five battalions of infantry available, not exactly an adequate force for the business in hand. On the evening of July 15th things looked so threatening that the officer in command at Trier turned out the nearest cavalry (the 9th Hussars) and hurried them off to the frontier for patrol-duty and purposes of observation. This was an ordinary measure of precaution, abundantly justified, but unfortunately he appears to have forgotten to mention the fact that war had not been formally declared, and that therefore the frontier must be respected. The consequence was that a hot-headed subaltern, burning to be the first man to set foot in France, violated French territory forthwith, a result which might have proved decidedly embarrassing for the higher diplomacy had it been reported, for at the time Bismarck had not yet "edited" the King's telegram.

However, as Verdy de Vernois (my principal authority for this period) placidly remarks, "Things are apt to be overlooked in an emergency." It was uncommonly lucky that the order for mobilisation (which of course is

not necessarily the declaration of war) arrived just two hours later. Directly after the receipt of this order the detachment of troops in Saarbrücken, within two miles of the frontier, marched out (the next morning) to their headquarters to pick up their war-equipment and reserves.

Now the townspeople had no knowledge of these administrative details, and at once the wildest rumours were afloat, and something like a panic prevailed. This latter was only partially allayed when the regiments actually detailed to occupy Saarbrücken marched into the town a few hours later; but before this the railway-people, with more zeal than discretion, had torn up their own rails in two places, and it is probable that the bridge would have been blown up could any powder have been found.

On the Luxembourg frontier the same needless destruction occurred. No one seems to have thought that the break-down gangs would be required at once to repair the absurd damage. For two or three days after the mobilisation, Saarbrücken rivalled Hong Kong as a source of rumours. First, the town was occupied by the French; then it was not occupied by them nor likely to be; the French army was advancing, it was not advancing, and so forth, until at last General von Goeben, commanding the district, was obliged to telegraph himself on the morning of the 17th for a categorical answer to the question, "Is Saarbrücken occupied, or is it not?" for it might very well have happened that the troops having marched out no others had come in to take their places, or the town might only contain the civil population. It so happened that Prussian troops had held it all the time, but the responsible staff-officer had forgotten to mention the fact to those whom it might concern

in the district. This was not, however, the fault of the Prussian troops, as they were reporting direct to headquarters in Berlin, and also to their own immediate superior, who, in sending on the gist of the messages to his general, omitted to state their origin, and the headquarters at Berlin had other things to think out, nor indeed was it their work to notify the local commander of the operations in his own district. But does not this clearly show how even the best laid plans can miscarry when the nation has not been trained to understand the operations of war, and to keep cool heads in an emergency? Civilians should be sufficiently familiarised with the contingencies arising from a declaration of war to understand how dangerous unfounded or exaggerated reports can be; and soldiers should be taught that the first thing to be done is to give the clearest possible statement of facts to the most responsible civilians, and to request them to keep quiet and not to make bad worse by hysteria.

Meanwhile it occurred to someone that it would be a good thing to blow up, or otherwise damage, the line between Saargemund and Bitsch on French soil, and a lieutenant of Uhlans, with a few troopers and railway-men, was dispatched for this purpose, but without definite instructions where to go or what to do when they got there.

To begin with, they could not get a map of the country in Saarbrücken, but they managed to scrape together a few crowbars, some dynamite, and some loose powder in a bag, and thus equipped they set off on their vague errand. From Saarbrücken to the railway in question is about twelve miles, a difficult country certainly for it is mountainous, but one would imagine a cavalry-man could have learned something of the ground he

was quartered near, and that, properly led, the distance could have been covered by the men in four or five hours at the very most. It took them exactly two days to find the railway, and the damage done by the wrecking-party could have easily been repaired in a couple of hours.

Curiously enough von Verdy gives the subaltern's name and quotes the case, if without praise, equally without disapproval. Major Kunz, another authority to whom we owe *THE HISTORY OF THE GERMAN CAVALRY IN FRANCE IN 1870-71* (one of the most remarkable books the campaign has produced) conceals this officer's name and is rather severe in his comments on him.

As for myself, when I saw the ground in question and realised the whole affair, I can only say that I "was unequal to the occasion," and felt that the only thing which could be bracketed with this performance was Mark Twain's ascent of the Riffelberg.

If you recollect, as I did at that moment, another ride made by a British officer in India you will still further appreciate the Uhlan's achievement. I mean the occasion when, at a certain point near the Sutlej, Lord Gough, having just received the Sikhs' declaration of war, turned to one of his aides-de-camp and pointing to Tapp's Nose, a mountain five thousand feet above the plains and forty miles away, said these words only: "Ride and fetch 'em."¹ Right over the Sewaliks, hills nearly twelve hundred feet high, and through the great jungles of the Doon, this officer, one of the "stupid British, horse-racing lot," rode without a check, reached his destination in five hours, just as night was falling,

¹ The 29th were quartered at Kansauli close to Tapp's Nose.

delivered his orders, and the regiment promptly marched the next morning.

Now the Englishman had to find his way alone through a roadless, mapless country over ground completely unknown to him, while the German was never further away from his garrison-town than a dozen miles, or he ought not to have been; also a map of the country he might be required to work over should have formed an essential part of his equipment.

To return to the history of the blunders made at the beginning of the Franco-Prussian campaign: away to the eastward, in the mountainous stretch between Saarbrücken and Weiszenburg, and thence across the Rhine valley, confusion reigned supreme. The space available for the masses of troops expected was very restricted, and it was particularly essential that timely warning of the enemy's approach should be given. Of organisation to this end, however, there is but little trace, although the German position would have been seriously endangered had a body of French troops penetrated through the mountains and wheeled in eastward upon their right wing.

But though this obvious peril failed to provide for its prevention, it started into vigorous existence the usual crop of alarming rumours. Already on July 23rd it was bruited about that eighty thousand French were concealed in the forests, prepared to fall next morning on the weak Bavarian detachment, and troops were hurriedly marched and countermarched to meet these chimerical levies.

A glance at the map ought to have satisfied any staff-officer of even moderate intelligence that nothing of the kind could possibly be true, and that even if true it could not essentially matter, since eighty thousand

men could neither advance nor deploy for action in such cramped country in less than forty-eight hours; yet this improbability was believed and accepted as fact by officers of some standing and experience. Here again is a proof of the necessity for the training that guards against men being thrown off their balance by a sudden upheaval of their usual routine of existence. If they were consistently educated to understand the meaning and unhesitatingly to accept the weight of responsibility, to think exactly and clearly, to weigh evidence carefully and to judge its worth swiftly, such blunders as these could not occur, because the reports which gave rise to them would be at once appraised at their true value.

Look, for instance, at the evidence on which were based those I am describing at the moment. On July 23rd an officer's patrol sent in the following report: "A workman ejected from Strasburg states that eighty thousand men are collected in that city, and began their advance towards Weiszenburg on July 22nd. West of Haguenau there are six thousand infantry and cavalry. Civilians employed in the Bienwald district report thirty-six thousand men at Siegen, eight miles south-east of Weiszenburg." On July 24th the Bavarian division reported: "A Bavarian sapper, returning to duty from Strasburg, says that there are forty thousand men in Bitsch. A deserter says that the troops marching to Bitsch took more than an hour to file past his hiding-place, and that Turcos were among them." Where was his hiding-place? Apparently no one took the trouble to enquire, or to record its whereabouts if known.

Incidentally it is worth while to point out that Turcos, Algerians, and Zouaves were at once seen all along the frontier from the very first day of

the war ; yet there was not a single one of these troops in France at the time, the first being only due to arrive at Marseilles on the 25th, a fact which had been duly notified to all German head-quarters by the General Staff at the commencement of operations. But in the universal excitement prevailing these instructions had been entirely forgotten.

On July 25th the enemy's numbers were still further magnified, but General von Bothmer of the Bavarians in forwarding the reports did at last suggest that the numbers might be exaggerated. Nevertheless the next morning, when General von Gersdorf, commanding the 22nd (Prussian) division, arrived in Landau, he was met with the announcement from Colonel von Thile, a brigadier, that eighty to ninety thousand French were already massed between Saargemünde and Bitsch, and were to attack Pirmasens on the next day.

Von Gersdorf, just arrived from a long railway journey and wholly ignorant of local positions, etc., could only act on the information received, and at once orders were issued for the German troops to concentrate and meet the apparently pressing danger ; as a consequence of this order they crossed the line of advance laid down for the corps appointed to follow them, and the way was prepared for a state of hopeless confusion had this movement been continued. Fortunately some one was wise enough to send in clearer reports ; the French, whose total numbers in that particular district never exceeded twenty thousand, showed no intention of advancing to the attack, and in a little while common sense had come to the rescue, the German alarmist movement was countermanded, and absolute chaos averted.

I have called special attention to this one incident as typical of what

was happening along the whole frontier. The civil population, anxious to assist as well as badly scared, brought in the wildest rumours ; patrols went out to endeavour to ascertain their truth, saw nothing themselves, and "came back to tea," as Albrecht said of our cavalry scouts on the Modder River. But for all this the rumours were accepted by responsible officers on the spot, and telegraphed on to headquarters, often in such a form as to leave it uncertain whether the senders of the telegrams had been eye-witnesses of the events reported or not. And to make all this foolishness still stranger, it happened that there were many people still alive, and presumably in sufficient possession of their wits, who could remember the days of the Napoleonic wars. Indeed, in my day, when I was at school in Constanx, German boys were extraordinarily well versed in the suffering and loss entailed by those old campaigns and in the history of the various leaders in them, and their several achievements. As this was before the campaign with Austria in 1866 it was no new thing which was now happening, and the knowledge must have been widely spread among the inhabitants of the country generally ; moreover all the able-bodied men had done their three years' service in the ranks ; and yet in spite of all this, except from a few non-commissioned officers of the Frontier Guards and Forest Police, not a single trustworthy report was brought in in those first days of panic and confusion. Excited men did not even know or recognise the colours of the French uniforms ; Lancers were mistaken for Hussars, Infantry of the Line for Zouaves, and so forth. If such curious mistakes are possible in a nation bred and educated amidst wars and alarms of war in a fashion impossible for our island population,

what may we not expect if ever foreign troops should land on our own coasts?

As matters stand now, how many of our local yeomanry, volunteers, cyclists, police, etc., could tell the difference between a French *chasseur à pied* and an ordinary linesman? And yet considering the great difference in the marching powers of the two, it would mean success or disaster if their respective presence was wrongly reported, as the former can move at exactly double the pace of the latter, and could surprise, and possibly destroy troops who would not be expecting an attack for several hours if they had heard they were to meet a line regiment moving at half the speed.

Nothing is more important for a Headquarter Staff than an accurate knowledge of the names and numbers of the regiments opposed to them, as from these indications a good staff-officer, knowing the capabilities and reputation of each of them, can gauge the composition of the whole army which his side will have to fight. It is analogous to the way in which men like Cuvier and Owen could from a bone or two build up correctly the animal to which they belonged. This is a commonplace of military instruction all the world over; yet in the first days of 1870, though several prisoners were taken, never once was the number of the regiment to which they belonged forwarded to headquarters, until at length a sharp special reminder was telegraphed from Berlin to all whom it might concern. It will be worth while to study for a moment the situation, as a whole, as it existed in Germany during the fortnight which elapsed between the declaration of war and the first serious fighting, from July 14th to August 2nd, and compare it with our position in Natal before Sir Redvers Buller's arrival.

The French forces formed part of a regular army properly uniformed and organised in battalions, brigades, etc, commanded by well-known men. It was moving in closed bodies of the strength of a battalion upwards, along well-known roads, bivouacking in masses of from one to ten thousand in the open fields, and all to within ten to twenty English miles of the German outposts. Now you cannot bivouac a brigade in a three-acre field, for instance, and a screen which will hide the glow of the fires on the sky has yet to be invented; yet in spite of such and similar simple aids to reasoning, the men whose business it was to find out the strength, and even the presence, of the enemy sent in very little trustworthy information regarding them. If it be argued in defence that the ground was enclosed and obstructed with woodland, I can only say so much the better for the determined scout who wished to see without being seen; it is easier to detect essential details at two hundred yards than at two thousand, and the chance of discovery is not approximately greater. Further than this the people were polyglot, had enjoyed sixty years of compulsory education on the German side at least; disguise was simple, and the troops moved at not more than two and a half miles an hour.

So much for the difficulties in 1870, and now for the other picture.

Natal possesses great mountain ranges and ravines, is peopled largely by Kaffirs, and owns many settlers of doubtful loyalty. In distinction to the French leaders, the Boer commanders were an unknown quantity as they had really not yet been appointed; while as to distribution no conclusion as to their army-organisation could be drawn since such a thing did not exist. They had no uniforms to distinguish them, and no roads to limit their movements. They

were almost as free and as fast as birds on the wing, and the speed of their manœuvres over, to us, almost unknown country made it impossible to follow them, while above all the distances might be reckoned thus,—multiply those on the German frontier by ten and you will still be well within the mark.

If a highly organised army like that of the Germans could do no better than it did under their easier conditions, with their well educated and intelligent soldier-citizens to aid it, is there any reason to expect that, had they been launched into war in South Africa as we were, that they would have excelled our "poor mercenaries" (the "scum of the nation," "the conscripts of poverty and famine," as they are pleased to call our troops), in the far more difficult circumstances which we had to face?

They have also delighted to make merry over our fighting record and to question the courage of "puny weaklings," pointing to the numerous incidents of surrender and the frequent surprises. Now surrenders of small bodies in the open field are a consequence of certain methods of fighting and certain kinds of ground, and when these conditions recur the phenomenon repeats itself. This our Austrian critics, who have studied their own military history, might be expected to know. But when organised armies fight on an unbroken front ten miles in extent and with ten to twenty thousand men to the mile ready to close all gaps as they occur, though the circumstances which tend to create surrender may arise the opportunity to seize them is not present.

It is a popular idea among the younger generation in Germany that all their soldiers fought like heroes in 1870, and it would go hard with a man who should venture to hint the

reverse. Yet thirty years ago Germans were less reticent, and many an officer has confided to me scenes that were almost incredible, and for which it would be hard to find a parallel in our own annals. Still it must always be remembered that human nature is the same everywhere, and that "skulking" is not unknown, a certain percentage of it, even in the bravest armies.

I could quote many incidents to prove this, but if I did a German critic would possibly challenge my testimony as biassed by national feeling; therefore it will be better to cite some taken from German sources, not from those of party polemics but from the serious works of military authors of the highest credit.

Foremost among such men stands Meckel who, if he lives and retains his vigour, must rise to very high command. In a pamphlet entitled *A SUMMER'S NIGHT'S DREAM* (*Sommers Nacht Traum*) written to recall to the younger officers who have not seen war the wide difference between the theories of the manœuvre-ground and the practice of the battle-field, he has described his own first experience in 1870-71. The name of the battle he suppresses, but internal evidence points to Saarbrücken on August 6th, a few days subsequent to the events already touched on.

I recalled my first battle in France. We did not arrive on the field until late in the day, and we crossed it where the fight had been fiercest. I was already used to the sight of the dead and wounded, but was not prepared for what now met my eyes. The field was literally strewn with men who had left the ranks and were doing nothing. Whole battalions could have been formed from them. From one position we could count hundreds. Some were lying down, their rifles pointing to the front, these had evidently remained behind when the more courageous had advanced; others had squatted like hares in the furrows.

Wherever a bush or ditch gave shelter, there were men to be seen who in some cases had made themselves very comfortable indeed. The men nearest me bore on their shoulder-straps the number of a famous regiment. I turned to look at my own men. They began to seem uneasy. Some were pale; I myself was conscious of the depressing effect produced on me by what I saw. If the fire of the breechloader, which we were now to face for the first time, while already its continuous roll sounded in our ears, had so disorganised this regiment, what would happen to us?

During our advance, before we came under any really serious fire, and whilst only the whistle of an occasional bullet could be heard, we saw six men, one behind the other in a long *queue*, cowering behind a tree; afterwards I saw this sight so frequently that I became accustomed to it—who did not? And this, I said to myself, is the result of three years' careful education in the independent use of cover. Would not Frederic the Great's soldiers, who knew nothing of fighting independently, have been ashamed to present such a spectacle to passing troops?

That this formed no isolated instance is further proved from the following account of the fighting at Woerth, which appeared anonymously in the *MILITAIRE WOCHENBLATT* but whose author was soon detected by internal evidence.

Our regiment soon received the order to advance. The Fusilier battalion (to which I belonged) moved off in company columns towards the Sauerbach. When we came within range of the enemy's bullets the skirmishing section of my company, which I commanded, was extended, and the other two sections followed, closed, at a short distance behind us. In front of us there was already a line of skirmishers, which appeared to have taken the first slopes of the hilly land lying towards Elsasshausen. After passing over the Sauerbach, where I lost sight of the rest of my company, we were obliged to cross the wide meadow which lies between the Sauer and the foot of the hills; on nearing these hills I saw the skirmishing line in front of me come down the hill at full speed,

evidently, as I thought, followed by the enemy at their heels.

I made my section take up a position in order to detain the pursuing enemy to the utmost. When the repulsed line reached us and had halted, I heard from one of the men (there was no officer present) that the French had attacked them with greatly superior numbers and forced them to retire. We waited, however, in vain to see the French come over the hill,—no one came; there were only some of the enemy to be seen half left in front of us, about five hundred paces distant; nevertheless the men fired for all they were worth, and I tried to prevent this as much as possible. Then there came along the line from the right a summons, given by signs from the officers, to endeavour to storm the heights, and the whole line of skirmishers went up the hill with a tempest of hurrahs and a fabulously rapid fire. Arrived above, we saw dense lines of the enemy's skirmishers, about four hundred paces in front of us, run away with the utmost rapidity and disappear behind the nearest wave of the ground. Why the French ran away from our thin line I cannot conceive; however we followed them as quickly as possible, the men indeed so excited that they could not be prevented firing at random. Then suddenly the advance stopped. We were just in a fold of the ground which allowed no general view; before I could satisfy myself as to the cause of this check, our whole line suddenly turned round, attended to no more orders and ran away, no one being able to discover any explanation for this phenomenon. The fact was, we afterwards learned, that the French had made another attack, with re-inforced swarms of skirmishers, which had repulsed our right wing, but which we had not even seen. After about two hundred paces we succeeded in bringing our running troops to a stand; I still saw no actual enemy, but we kept up uninterruptedly a very hot fire. We now again went forward, after having calmed the men as much as possible. This time the French let us approach to within about two hundred paces and then fired; it was a very critical moment, then—suddenly the enemy's line in its turn wavered, and ran away; we followed shouting and firing all the time.

We had now approached to within about five hundred paces of Elsasshausen, the

point d'appui of the French; on our left was the Nieder Wald. Here we received such a hail of bullets that to press forward was impossible, and we all sought cover. A long fire-fight now ensued, and our situation was momentarily becoming more unpleasant. The men looked anxiously round to see if any supports were coming,—but in vain; the officers could hardly keep them still in position owing to the disappearance of many of their comrades, and the duration of the combat which had now lasted several hours; in fact they were thoroughly depressed.

We then distinctly saw some French battalions in close order approaching to the attack. This was too much for the men; they turned about, all our efforts to detain them were in vain, and though we did not actually run away the whole line fell slowly back. We gave way step by step, followed by the attacking enemy. I looked upon the battle as lost, for there were no reserves to be seen which could have supported us. We had already retired some hundred and fifty paces in this manner when all at once we heard sounded "*The whole line will advance,*" and on all sides the call was taken up by the buglers. This gave the men fresh courage and their retreating movement ceased; at the same moment we saw some closed battalions of Wurtembergers approaching, which was sufficient to send us all forward with renewed life. We advanced against the enemy with ever-increasing speed. The French turned once more, hesitated, turned again, and ran.

This proved to be the end of the battle; the French had broken and run, and the Germans remained the victors, more by good luck apparently than by good management.

In neither of the above instances did the troops specified form part of a beaten army, or even of one very heavily engaged. It was merely fair average fighting, neither more nor less, and was very different from what happened when things for a time went badly, as at Gravelotte and Mars la Tour. Yet who can doubt that these men, "squatting like hares in the furrows," would not very readily have acceded to the invita-

tion to "put up their hands" had the general situation allowed or favoured their being surrounded?

With reference to current military opinion as expressed by the correspondents of our daily Press, is it not obvious that such incidents are likely to occur when these correspondents are doing their best to shake the confidence of the men in their leaders by unrestrained and ignorant criticism of matters beyond their intellectual horizon? The Germans and French had been frightened into cowardice by the gruesome tales of the terrible power of the new weapons which had been diligently circulated throughout the Fatherland by unprincipled sensation-mongers, and they skulked and stayed behind because they went into action with the idea that all frontal attacks were foredoomed to failure from the outset. Their business, as they understood it, was primarily to take good care of their own skins, and they were only conscious of showing a high degree of individual intelligence in the efforts they made to avoid all danger.

Hence such scenes as those described will, and must, remain common on every battle-field, whatever the nationality of the troops, until the instruction of tactics is based on the firm ground of mathematical investigation, and not on the wild assertions of neurotic inventors born of the result of experiments at the target.

With reference to the many surprises which have befallen our own troops it is curious that their frequency has been very largely due to the influence of German example in 1870; and had the latter been in our place in South Africa I am inclined to believe they would have proved even more unfortunate than ourselves.

In 1870 the German cavalry so quickly acquired a crushing superiority

over that of their enemy that they swept the country for miles in front of the infantry, who for greater convenience and freedom of movement soon abandoned the use of their usual elaborate precautions on the march. This it was perfectly safe for them to do against a slow-moving, uniformed army, because when the cavalry had once scoured a whole wide district and found it vacant, there was no possibility of any dangerous bodies of troops suddenly occupying it, and consequently the practice of trusting all to the care of the cavalry insensibly crept into all armies.

Unfortunately in South Africa it was the cavalry which was the slowest force in respect to the enemy, and the fact that, say, at ten in the morning, ground was reported clear was no guarantee that at noon it might not be swarming with Boers who had raced in twenty miles whilst our men had moved perhaps eight.

Then further there was the difficulty of distinguishing between the effusively loyal colonist who only waited for the disappearance of our troops to take down, or dig up, his rifle and become a dangerous enemy on flank or in rear, and the men we could, as the event proved, really trust.

When the Franc-Tireurs arrived on the scene in 1870 the conditions of warfare became more like those at present rife in South Africa, and the surprises of patrols and small bodies up to the size of a company or squadron became by no means uncommon. In all, Major Kunz tabulates from official diaries no fewer than forty-six of these incidents, in only six of which did the Germans succeed in beating off their assailants; and the total casualty-list under this heading for six months amounted to thirty officers, six hundred and forty-

three men and eight hundred and fifty horses, figures which compare very unfavourably with our own losses when the far wider area of ground covered by us with the same numbers, and the rapidity of the Boers' movements added to their absolute knowledge of every inch of hill and veldt are brought into consideration, and finally by their practice of appropriating our dead soldiers' uniforms and passing themselves off as our own men.

In the face of these facts, and considering the tremendous responsibility of those who disseminate "wisdom" which George Eliot once defined as "dwelling in minds attentive to their own" (thoughts and theories), would it not be better, and at least more humane, if they gained more accurate "knowledge," which, in the same sentence, she says is "replete with the thoughts of other men;" if, that is to say, they should study sound military history, understand something at least of military mathematics, learn how to weigh evidence, reason out tangled problems, and should refrain from turning their fellow-men into cowards, a proceeding which has and will cost the life of many a good fellow, who has to lead, in the past and future! Might it not also be well for those in authority over us to ignore the men in the street, both at home and abroad, who constitute themselves as amateur critics, and to fearlessly follow sound precedent in dealing with rank disloyalty, as the Germans dealt with the French Franc-Tireurs? It is unpleasant counsel perhaps, but it saves life in the end on both sides; and a good many men and officers we could ill spare would be alive now for further useful work had this policy been rigorously enforced from the beginning.

F. N. MAUDE,

Lt.-Col. late Royal Engineers, p.s.c.

FORECASTS OF THE FUTURE.

ALTHOUGH its first year has now passed into the domain of history, social and political seers are still engaged in casting the new century's horoscope. Not only the Utopian romancers, whom we always have with us, but even more sober and practical minds are, at the opening of fresh eras, tempted to make experiments in prophecy. The twentieth century loomed so big with portents for humanity that it was inevitable its signs of the times should be closely scanned for indications of the direction which progress was likely to take during its course. All through the past year, for instance, Mr. H. G. Wells has been laboriously expounding his generally entertaining and often curious ANTICIPATIONS in the pages of a monthly review, and has now republished them in a substantial volume. It is to be feared that Mr. Wells has made, for a prophet, the very serious mistake of too minutely condescending to particulars (to use the Scottish legal phrase); and hence, while some of his predictions may prove happy guesses at the probable trend of events, others, more fanciful and less fortunate, have no better prospect of realisation than the mechanical social arrangements devised by the late Mr. Edward Bellamy for the New Boston of the year 2000.

But other serious prophets have been in the field, and during the past few years a number of forecasts of Britain's future have been made, some of which had no special reference to the new chronological cycle down whose grooves the great world

is now spinning. They are nevertheless of more than usual interest in view of streams of tendency which are not only attracting general attention, but in some quarters causing much concern.

In the domain of scientific progress, certain conclusions as regards the course of events during the present century are almost obvious. That electricity will be the chief mechanical power of the twentieth century, as steam has been that of the nineteenth; that before many years are over we shall probably be travelling at the rate of a hundred miles an hour, and upwards, by rail, and at thirty miles an hour, or more, by motor-car on ordinary roads; that, as one effect of the increasing speed of locomotion our cities will, as Mr. Wells points out, become more diffused, so that the suburbs of London may spread over about a third of the area of England; that the problem of aerial locomotion will be solved before the century is old,—if indeed M. Santos-Dumont has not already solved it—and air-cars become as common as motor-cars are now; that the approaching exhaustion of our coal-fields will bring into use fresh kinds of fuel and new methods of generating heat,—these are all possibilities of the future which need no great imaginative power or phenomenal acuteness of vision to foresee. It is certain that the century will do wonders in economising both time and labour, by means of new mechanical inventions alike for the workshop, travel, and the household. The anticipation of one writer that before the century's close every family,

however humble, will have its own motor-car, seems over-sanguine; were the prediction realised it might entail the gradual atrophy of the human organs of locomotion, a result hardly desirable.

In the political sphere there are, unhappily, no indications at present visible that the new century will usher in the Golden Age of Universal Peace, and men have almost ceased to predict the coming of the Millennium. War is doubtless revolutionising its methods, but it has not (with all respect to M. Jean de Bloch) become impossible. Imperial Federation may find its full fruition even while the century is yet young. There is little doubt also that the movement among the Great Powers towards what Mr. Benjamin Kidd calls the Control of the Tropics, will complete itself by the annexation of all the hitherto unappropriated portions of the earth's surface. Every possible land-claim for posterity, even those centring upon the as yet undiscovered poles, will probably have been, as Lord Rosebery calls it, pegged out before the year 1902 is turned. "With the filling up of the temperate regions," says Mr. Kidd, "and the continued development of industrialism throughout the civilised world, the rivalry and struggle for the trade of the Tropics will, beyond doubt, be the permanent underlying fact in the foreign relations of the Western nations in the twentieth century." This conclusion can hardly be disputed.

Turning our glance homeward again, questions as to the probable advent of Socialism have been asked and variously answered, according to the proclivities of the prophet who gives the answer. There are those who assure us that the tide has now set in, if not for the full flood of Social Democracy, at least for a more

or less complete inundation of Municipal Socialism. A close and impartial review of the course of recent events will, however, suggest many doubts as to whether this, after all, is the direction in which social evolution will lead us. It would need something like a miraculous upheaval, a revolutionary cataclysm, to establish Social Democracy in the Seats of the Mighty during the present century. Ten years ago Socialism appeared to be much nearer realisation than it is to-day. Its advocates then had the popular ear; the working-classes were much taken with their glowing pictures of the future, and in the absence of any effective reply the Social Revolution seemed at hand. But since then the proposals of the Socialists have been subjected to a sharp fire of criticism from more than one quarter, and the fallacies of Marx have been so thoroughly riddled that they are now discarded even by Socialists themselves. Mr. Bernard Shaw announced some time ago, on behalf of the Fabians, that this influential section of the school had disowned the doctrines of their founder. Mr. H. M. Hyndman, the leader of the English Social Democrats, has, after more than twenty years of active propagandist effort, both in the press and on the platform, retired dispirited from his post, despairing of the success of a class-warfare in this country. Even the Social Democrats of Germany have very materially modified their programme; several of their leaders have announced that they no longer look for the realisation of their Utopian dreams, and Edward Bernstein has almost demolished Karl Marx. We may have various trials of Municipal Socialism, or gas-and-water Socialism, as it has been disparagingly called, during this century; but there are not wanting indications that the workers are beginning

to realise that a pure Socialism and liberty stand at opposite poles, and that increasing State-control means increasing curtailment of the natural rights of the citizen. If this conviction once takes hold of the working-classes, as Dr. Schäffle years ago predicted it would, there is likely to be a revolt against further progress towards Socialism. We may be carried by new political currents further away from Social Democracy in the new century than we were in the old. That which Mr. Herbert Spencer spoke of as the coming slavery, may not come at all; but instead thereof, we may see new efforts to reconcile liberty with that equality of opportunity which professes to be one of the chief aims of Socialism, but which ought to be attainable without the irritating espionage and interference of the State.

In the economic sphere more serious portents are, however, threatening us. The late Dr. Charles Pearson, in his *NATIONAL LIFE AND CHARACTER*, first published some ten years back, predicted that the Yellow Men of the Far East would increase and multiply to such an extent as to overrun the Western Continents, and that their peaceful but resistless invasion would seriously peril Britain's future. To some extent this prediction, though much criticised at the time, is in process of fulfilment. Both China and Japan are now competing with us in various industries, while Chinamen are already overrunning the American States and even invading our own labour-market. A French writer, M. Gustave le Bon, has gone even further than Dr. Pearson in this line of pessimistic prophecy. He predicts that the opening of China to Western civilisation will be followed by Pekin's becoming the "bourse of the world," and that soon "European workmen will be begging for work on any

terms, owing to the deluge of Chinese low-priced labour." The spectre of the Yellow Peril has begun to materialise somewhat menacingly of late, though these alarming vaticinations may prove exaggerated.

It is in connection with the industrial and economic changes which appear to threaten our commercial supremacy, that the more thoughtful forecasts of our country's future will probably attract most attention. In view of the increasing keenness and success of foreign competition, and the ousting of British manufactures from various markets, what fate do the signs of the times portend for Great Britain? We can no longer claim to be the workshop of the world. Other nations have gone into the business, and in future we can only expect a share of the world's orders. The rapidly growing excess of imports over exports, though partially explained by what are called invisible exports, points to a pending change in the commercial relations of our own and other countries. What is the nature of that change? Has our industrial supremacy gone for ever? Must we write up *Ichabod* over our factories and ship-yards? Is the new world, as has been hinted by one writer, about to buy up the old, and will the centre of the Universe be transferred from London to New York? There are not wanting doleful prophets who are ready to answer these questions in the affirmative, and who predict the rapid industrial decadence of Great Britain. But on the other hand, at least two recent writers, who have been closely watching economic tendencies, tell us that, although a change is pending, it will not necessarily be to the disadvantage of our country, and may indeed be greatly to its advantage.

The two distinctive forecasts of Britain's future which these writers

have put forward are novel, plausible, and ingenious; and they seem to be deserving of more consideration than the majority of guesses at the future which the birth of the new century has evoked. Mr. Marcus Dorman, in a recent work on the tendencies of popular thought, denies that manufacture is, as was generally supposed, the backbone of English industry. Analysing the census figures of the occupations of the people in 1891, he shows that the proportion of the population which lives by making goods for exportation is only from ten to twenty per cent., and as this proportion was then decreasing, it is probably much less now. The economic tendency in these days is to manufacture nearer the raw material than hitherto. Many of our own capitalists have established cotton-mills in India, and those of America have built factories in the Southern States, which are competing successfully with the older mills in Massachusetts. Manufacture will, Mr. Dorman maintains, "gradually leave this country and seek its home on the site Nature has indicated by her raw products." England will still remain in the business, only her capitalists will carry it on in other lands; we shall supply alike the capital, the brains, and the hands for factories and works all over the world. Both capitalists and workers will in future make their money abroad, but they will return home to spend it. Though we cease to manufacture in Great Britain, we shall direct and control the lion's share of the industry and commerce of the world. Most of the monetary business will be transacted here, and London will remain the world's financial centre. In short, in course of time, Great Britain will become a "huge market clearing-house and bank, where the majority of its workers will be engaged in exchange,

or in organising and managing industries carried on elsewhere." The British workman will not altogether find his occupation gone when this change comes. "The English artisan thus displaced will," our prophet tells us, "gradually assume some other rôle in life, developing into perhaps an administrator or director of mechanical labour abroad, for which he has already proved himself superior to any other race, or will be occupied in the purely financial and executive work at home." In this particular the prediction has been in course of fulfilment for some years past. Skilled artisans from Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the north of the Tweed have been in demand as foremen and managers of mills established mainly by British capital in North and South America, India, China, Japan, and Russia, while numbers of our clever mechanics and engineers have gone out to take charge of machinery in pretty nearly every foreign land. They obtain good salaries, which enable them in a few years' time to return to their native country. To facilitate a greater employment of British workmen in this way still further attention will, of course, have to be given by us in future to secondary and technical education. To expert and educated young workers the prospect so opened, though it may entail some years of residence abroad, is by no means unattractive.

A similar forecast, but varied in some of its features, was drawn by the late Mr. William Clarke in an article published in *THE CONTEMPORARY REVIEW* some months back. Mr. Clarke appears to agree with Mr. Dorman so far as to hold that our country will become less and less a manufactory for the world; nor does he think that our industrial supremacy will be saved by any development of markets in our colonies. They also are beginning to manufac-

ture for themselves. Thus, Canada is entering the lists as a competitor in iron and steel, and in some specialities of machinery. India, though not, of course, a colony, but only a dependency, has for years been a competitor with us in textiles, and Lancashire has felt keenly the activity of the Bombay mills. What is more, our colonies are quite as ready to buy their wares from foreign nations as from the mother country,—like us they seek the cheapest markets. What South Africa may yet do for us it is hard to say. We have there, it is true, great undeveloped estates; but our older South African colonies have also begun to manufacture for themselves, and they too patronise our competitors, America and Germany.

Mr. Clarke's conclusion, from a careful review of existing economic conditions, is that schemes for maintaining Britain's industrial supremacy "are all doomed to failure," and that, in course of time, "we, in this island country, shall retire from the race?" What then? Is industrial ruin the fate in store for the old country? No; like Mr. Dorman, Mr. Clarke, taking an independent view of his own, has consolations for us in the changing conditions of the century. He sees a new, and in some respects even a brilliant future for our country. Britain is to become, is even now becoming, the "pleasure-ground of English-speaking peoples, the summer-resort to which increasing multitudes will repair to find rest and recreation and to drink in those ancient historic influences so greatly needed by a not very imaginative population living in new countries void of human interest, devoted to daily gain, and dominated by rather commonplace and at times distinctly sordid and vulgar aims." Thus, according to this hypothesis, the mass of the English common people,

without being relegated necessarily to entirely servile positions, "will more and more tend to be the ministers in some way of this new rich class of English-speaking peoples, who will repair, for purposes of health or culture, to their ancestral seats." There is even now to be seen a decided movement, increasing yearly in strength and volume, in this direction. Crowds of wealthy Americans and Colonials are in the habit of repairing to the old country for health or pleasure year after year. A number of American millionaires, like Mr. Astor and Mr. Carnegie, have now settled residences in this country, while many others, and even visitors from the Continent, also make long annual sojourns in our land. Every summer the number of American visitors to spots rich in natural beauty or historic associations, in England, Scotland and Ireland, is increasing, and at some of these places they even outnumber the English visitors. Of course they usually make a longer or shorter stay in the metropolis. Rich Americans seem to find the social amenities and pleasures of life more to their taste in this country than in their own, and so each year more and more of them are setting up permanent establishments here. The multiplication in late years of huge hotels in London and in most of our pleasure-resorts is largely due to these American visitors. These facts testify to the growing popularity of Great Britain as a world's pleasure-resort.

The increasing attention given to sanitary and hygienic improvement throughout the country, and the corresponding fall in the death-rate, are other circumstances enhancing the attractions of these islands for foreign visitors and residents. Mr. Clarke remarks on this prospect that, as compared with our black, dingy industrialism, "it will not be unwelcome to

many. Artists, quiet people who are weary of the present din, the growing number of Ruskin's followers, would not be sorry to see once more a clean, healthy England, cleared of her pall of smoke, with pure streams and pleasant red-tiled towns instead of our black 'hell-holes.' They would not be sorry to see the growth of the London octopus arrested and the general encroachment of sprawling cities on green nature stopped." Along with the increasing tendency of men of wealth and culture to resort to this country for pleasure and health, there would be a large growth of the professional, artistic, and literary classes, as well as of the shopkeeping, catering, and other trades which live by administering to those who have money to spend.

Of the political aspects of these predicted changes it is unnecessary here to speak, further than to say that the author of this forecast considers the new social conditions unfavourable to Democracy. On the other hand, however, with the check to industrialism, and to the growth of factories, many of the social problems that now perplex us, such as the housing-question, would tend to their own solution. Britain would, politically and industrially, have entered upon an epoch of rest. This picture of our social future, it will be seen, might easily be made to fit in with Mr. Dorman's forecast of the industrial and commercial future, though it is not drawn entirely on the same lines. Not only so, but Mr. Wells also, in his *ANTICIPATIONS*, working on still other grounds, leads his readers to expect a state of society very much resembling that of Mr. Clarke's social forecast. He anticipates a large increase in the wealthy shareholding class, the class which lives upon its investments in all parts of the world, without taking

a direct, active part in the management or working of the enterprises from which its members derive their income. Along with this there will be an enormous growth of the expert engineering class, for Mr. Wells's main point is the remarkable multiplication of machines for saving labour and time which is coming. In a "world which is steadily abolishing locality," he thinks, "there will be no great, but many rich." Then "the practical abolition of distances and the general freedom of people to live anywhere they like over large areas, will mean very frequently an actual local segregation." These segregations will be literary, artistic, scientific, engineering, and so on. "The best of the wealthy will gravitate to their attracting centres," and "unless some great catastrophe break down all that man has built, these great kindred groups of capable men and educated, adequate women must be the element finally emergent amidst the vast confusions of the coming time." The prospect, therefore, is hopeful, even according to Mr. Wells, who writes as regards the great masses of the people in a somewhat pessimistic tone, and goes so far as to predict the passing of Democracy with the first great war, and the emergence of a New Republic of Intellect.

Whether the prognostications by Messrs. Dorman and Clarke of Britain's industrial future, or those of Mr. Wells, will be considered attractive, or the reverse, will depend upon the turn of the mind which contemplates them. Of course, no one need be too ready to accept such generalisations as certain to be verified, for even when a stream of tendency appears to have set strongly in one particular direction, at that very moment cross-currents may be

making which will either divert it from its goal, or cause it to break up, like the gulf-stream. Hence, though some of the predictions of our social and political seers may be fulfilled, or partially fulfilled, very few will be carried out wholly, nor is any one of them likely to be realised to the letter.

In any case, if our sons strive to do their duty in the present, and to equip themselves to the utmost as socially efficient units of our civilisation, whatever direction that civilisation may take, they need have no fear of their country's future. It may be something very different from even the most plausible and probable forecast yet put forward, though certain elements of more than one such may be woven into its fabric. We may say of these forecasts, as Dr. Pearson wrote of his own somewhat more pessimistic predictions a dozen or so years ago, "Should it be so that something like what the Norsemen conceived as the twilight of the

gods is coming upon the earth, and that there will be a temporary eclipse of the higher powers, we may at least prepare for it in the spirit of the Norsemen, who, as the *YNGLINGA SAGA* tells us, deemed that whether God gave them victory or called them home to Himself, either award was good. . . . Simply to do our work in life, and to abide the issue, if we stand erect before the eternal calm as cheerfully as our fathers faced the eternal unrest, may be nobler training for our souls than the faith in progress." While bracing ourselves to meet thus manfully any changes which impend there is no sufficient reason for a feeling of despondency, or even of apprehension, as regards the future. We have naturally entered the twentieth century with both hopes and fears for our country; but who shall say that the indications, fairly looked in the face, do not give us most ground for hope?

JESSE QUAIL.

HIS LAST LETTER

[THIS letter came into my hands among the papers of the late eminent judge, Sir John Molland, whose standard work upon *THE LAW OF DOMICILE* has made his name familiar to every student of English jurisprudence. The writer was his elder brother, Colonel Molland, of the East India Company's Service, who was in command of the 115th Bengal Native Infantry, when they mutinied at Sigrapore on their march to Delhi. Colonel Molland was one of the few officers who escaped on that occasion; he subsequently served with great distinction at the siege of Delhi, and was killed, in the assault on that city, at the head of the column which carried the Water Bastion. Miss Danvers, who is mentioned in the letter, afterwards made a very brilliant marriage, and was a prominent figure in London society some forty years or so ago.—J. B. H.]

*The Ridge before Delhi,
September 13th, 1857.*

My Dear Jack,

Our correspondence of late years has been so very intermittent, through my own fault, no doubt, for I have no wish, at the present moment, to say anything which can, by any possibility, be twisted into a reproach—so, you may be sure that, if I thought you were in the least to blame for it, I should not make any allusion to the subject; but it has been so very intermittent that you will, perhaps, be surprised to hear from me now.

You will be still more surprised, when you learn the especial distinction I am conferring on you; for this epistle, wildly scrawled with a stumpy quill, by the light of one wretched candle perpetually spluttering with frizzling flies, will probably be my last effort at prose composition.

The General has at last made up his mind, or had it made up for him,—it doesn't make much difference which—to prefer a chance of defeat to the certainty. We assault to-morrow at daybreak, instead of waiting till the sick-list, which has already reduced our effective strength by one half, has grown big enough to absorb the whole of his command. We assault, I say, to-morrow at daybreak, and we've got to win,—we shall win, unless the Pandies shoot straight enough to account for every man in our force, because, from what I've seen of our fellows, I'm convinced that there is no way to beat them except by exterminating them. To-morrow, I repeat, we must and shall be masters of Delhi; but, how many of us will be left to congratulate ourselves on that victory is another question, and one upon which I'm not at all prepared, or inclined, to prophesy. There is a grim suggestiveness about the orders we shall have to read to the men presently, when they parade: "No man is to leave the ranks to attend to the wounded. The wounded, officers and men alike, must remember that, if we are victorious, they shall receive every possible attention, at the earliest opportunity; if we fail, wounded and unwounded must, alike, prepare for the worst." But we shall not fail, we cannot afford to fail; the lives of all the Europeans between Peshawur and Calcutta depend on our carrying the city to-morrow, and we will carry it. The odds are, as nearly as we can calculate, five to one against us, and the five are

fighting from behind stone walls ; but we have right, British pluck, and Nicholson on our side, and that more than evens the odds.

I trust that England will some day realise and appreciate the work that our little army has been, and is, doing here. For nearly three months they have been fighting, every day and most of every day, against tremendous odds. They have only laid aside their muskets to labour with pick and shovel in the trenches, till they dropped from sheer fatigue. Fever, dysentery, and cholera have laid their grip on one man out of every two, but there is no complaining, and there is no giving in. I cannot sum up their exploits better than by saying that I shall start for the fearful ordeal of to-morrow in absolute confidence that some of us will stand in the King's Palace as conquerors. But, who among us, and how many ? And I can hardly count upon being one.

Nor can I say that I mind about myself, very much. Of course, life is dear to every man, and I am sorry for the grief it will cause to so many of you at home ; but my heart broke when the dear old regiment mutinied. Oh, Jack ! How could they ? How could they ? When I think of all they had endured and wrought together,—of those forced marches in 1845, so nobly borne,—of that night of over-wrought waiting on the field of Ferozeshah, when, amid the heaps of still bleeding slain, friend and foe sank to rest within pistol-shot of each other,—of that resolute advance through the baffling jungle at Chilianwallah,—of all the varied incidents of the fifteen years I have spent with the colours in peace and war,—how could they ? How could they ? I grow almost hysterical when I think about them, but I won't cross out what I've written, so that you may know that, if I do fall to-morrow, you must not

grieve for me, as for one taken from life when it was sweet to him. But, please God, I sha'n't get my death from a 115th musket ! That would be a little too hard on me, when there are thirty other regiments of mutineers in Delhi.

Perhaps you are surprised at my picking you out to receive this "last dying speech and confession," since, gloze it over as you will, that is what it amounts to ; but one of my chief reasons for doing so is because I haven't heard from you lately. You can have no idea what a torture my English letters have been to me for the past four months. Of course, it wasn't the writers' fault ; they didn't know what they were doing, and could never have guessed that, by writing in high spirits, they were not doing their best to keep me in high spirits too ; but there has been something supremely horrible in their cheerful, prattling gossip about dances and concerts and such things, at a time when we never went to bed without expecting that our bungalows would be ablaze before morning.

If you had to watch by the death-bed of a dear old friend, you would not like the people next door to choose that night to give a dance ; and English India, since the storm burst at Meerut, has been one vast chamber of death, where, however, the watchers cannot count on a much longer life than the dying. I can assure you, Jack, during the terrible ordeal of this summer, my home-letters have been more of a pain than a pleasure to me.

Don't think that I'm one whit less fond of you. I love you all as much as ever, from Aunt Elspeth in her moss-grown Galloway manse, to Jessie's latest infant phenomenon in her smart *bassinette* ; but, one and all, they have got upon my nerves to a frightful extent,—though, on that score, it is

the merest justice to acquit Jessie's baby and her immediate contemporaries—while they thought they were cheering the lonely hours of my Indian exile; but, if they had only known! The day I got Jessie's minute account of Madge's wedding, I saw the murdered bodies of poor Duberfield's wife and child lying by the still glowing ashes of his bungalow; on the day which brought me Nellie's "full, true and particular" narrative of the Brendons' fancy-dress ball, we buried Tom Hardy, the brightest, jolliest subaltern who ever neglected his regimental duties to go pig-sticking. The contrast of their frivolous gaieties at home with the deadly earnestness of our struggle for life out here has thrown me out of touch and sympathy with my usual home-correspondents. I know it's foolish of me; they meant nothing but what was kind and loving, and for the world I would not have them know what I feel; but, as I said, I'm thrown out of touch with them, and I can't sit down and write to them as fully and frankly as I should like, just now; so, I'm writing to you.

I can see you, dear old Jack, with a suspicious, Old Bailey sort of smile curling up the corners of your legal mouth, as you say to yourself, "He must be very much in a corner, before he's driven to plead such a lame excuse as that"; but it is my real motive, or, if I have another, it doesn't weigh with me so much, at least, I don't think it does, and I've no reason for attempting to deceive you *now*. But I do not see why I need be ashamed of the other reason even if it were my only one, which, as I've already told you, it isn't.

I rather gathered from some expressions Mrs. Jack,—I will not say "your wife," because I want to dissociate you as much as possible from the opinions which you must teach

her not to hold—from some expressions Mrs. Jack used in her last letter, that she was inclined to think that Mary Danvers had treated me badly, when I was over in England on furlough. I don't want to turn mawkish or sentimental, so I won't appeal to any touching recollections of our earlier years, but, if we were ever good friends, Jack,—and I cannot remember our ever having been anything else—don't let her think so. What's the good of a husband, if he can't make his wife think as he does? If I fall to-morrow—and the sound of the jackals howling over the carnage of the last sortie reminds me of the likelihood of such an issue without at all increasing my appetite for it—but if I fall, do not allow your wife to let any memory of me come between her and the bravest and unluckiest girl in the world, who has no other friend left; because I'm not worth it,—whatever the partiality of friends and relations may lead them to think about me, I'm not worth it. Besides, I owe Mary Danvers a great deal more pleasure than pain; I owe her some pain, I confess, but it was of my own seeking, whereas the pleasure she bestowed upon me was her own free gift.

Yes, after all this preamble, Jack, I have arrived, at last, at something honest and definite; perhaps, the real, sole object of this letter. I don't want to spend this last night telling my relatives that I love them,—I trust they know that—or promising them to try and do my duty,—I hope they will take that for granted; but, I do beg of you to be kind to Mary Danvers, for my sake. If I live to see her again, which, of course, is possible, and, if she would accept it, which is most improbable, all I possess should be hers; so, at least, let me leave her the one legacy she will not refuse and which she so sorely needs,

the friendship of all who will befriend her for my sake ; and first among that number, Jack, I trust I may reckon you and your wife.

It was not her fault ! It was not her fault ! If I thought that repetition would bring that truth home to you, I would go on writing it, like the text in a copy-book, till the time for falling-in. It really was not her fault.

How was she to guess, in the innocence of her seventeen years, that the withered, grey-moustachioed, middle-aged Indian soldier could care for her, except as an uncle, or, at the utmost, as a father ? So she accepted all my attentions with a frank unquestioning affection, which bore as much resemblance to love on the surface, as it was fatally and hopelessly different from it in reality ; and, when the true state of affairs revealed itself to her, as if an earthquake had opened the ground before her feet, it hurt her even more than it hurt me ; and, God knows, it hurt me badly enough.

Be kind to Mary, Jack, and don't be jealous of her, even if, this last night, my thoughts do turn to her in preference to all my home-circle. She has come in between me and them, and blotted them all out, but she never wished to do anything of the kind ; it's only my folly which has placed her on a pedestal, where she shuts out all the rest of the world from my eyes. My folly,—but, after all, Jack, it's a folly I wouldn't change for wisdom. I ask for no better company in my tent to-night than my memories of her,—of the quiet, rather plain, sharp-nosed little girl with flowing hair, whom Lady Turnbull brought to the Hospital concert,—of the very shy and silent *débutante* in white, whom your wife committed to my charge at that ball of yours, with the request that

I would see that she got plenty of partners,—of the unconventional, jolly little maiden who stayed with you, that summer, at Combe-Martin. If it were not for the sounds outside which warn me that the men are getting their arms ready for the great hazard of to-morrow, I could almost fancy myself back at Combe-Martin now.

Those sweet and bitter days at Combe-Martin ! There was one hat she used to wear there, a perfectly bewitching hat ; I could never see her in it, without feeling an almost irresistible desire to clasp her in my arms, and claim her as mine against all the world. Indeed, at last I had to caution her, to tell her never to wear that particular hat when she was going out with me. “ Why ? Don't you think it's pretty ? ” “ Oh, yes, pretty enough. ” “ Then, why shouldn't I wear it ? ” “ I can't tell you ; some day perhaps you'll know, or, at least, guess. ” I wonder if she recollects that conversation ; it was enigmatical enough to fix itself in any one's memory. But how trivial all this is, and what dreadful drivel it must sound to you, Jack !

Still, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of setting down one more picture of her in black and white. It was the day before I sailed, when I forgot everything, my years, my life of exile, her position,—I must have been a brute to have forgotten that—and spoke. Her cry of genuine misery and horror—“ What do you mean ? I never thought of that ! ”—is ringing in my ears still ; even now I can see her bent over the arm of the big chair in your study, sobbing as if her heart would break. No ! Mary Danvers never treated me badly ; I treated her selfishly, brutally,—fiendishly, if you like—I, the man, who should have kept pain

from her, the woman,—I who would gladly have died to save her a single pang.

But it is best as it is. We must march up the breach to-morrow without casting a look back over our shoulders at the world we may never see again. There is an empire to redeem, there are lives, hundreds of lives, of our countrymen and countrywomen in imminent peril. Many there are among us who will find it bitterly hard to turn their backs for ever on wife, on children, on home; had I any prospect of winning Mary's love, the world would seem too bright for me to quit, without such a regret as we, the *enfants perdus* of British rule in India, must not allow ourselves to feel.

My time grows short now, and this candle is guttering its last. Good-

bye dear, dear old Jack! Be kind to Mary Danvers; she is my dying charge to you. Give my love to all at home, from the Scotch aunts to Jessie's wonderful infant, of whom I have heard so much, but whom I shall never see. If they like to add my name to the family tablet in the old church at home, let them carve after it *Fell at Delhi* and nothing more; no man could ask for a nobler epitaph.

Please ask your wife to let Mary know,—if she thinks it will not hurt her too much,—that my love for her has never changed, and never could change, and that I thank the providence of Heaven that has let me know and feel her excellence. And don't forget that I owe her nothing but good.

The men are falling-in.

THE REVIVAL OF A LANGUAGE.

THE modern conception of civilisation seems to involve the agglomeration of communities into vast masses, all governed by the same institutions and all speaking the same language; and there are those who exult in the fact that English, of all competitors, has the best chance to become, in the cant term, a world-speech, doing away with the curse of Babel, to the immense advantage of people who buy and sell. I cannot understand this enthusiasm. Neither the pidgin-English of China, nor the trade-English of West Africa, nor the delectable dialect of the Wall Street broker, kindles in me the least glow of satisfaction. I am a Little Englander in the matter of language; and every extension of a speech beyond the limits in which it originally took shape seems to take from it something of its essential character and beauty. It becomes less and less an appropriate instrument for embodying thought and imagination, and more and more a convenient tool in the business of barter and money-making. Latin and Greek literature ceased to be interesting in proportion as the languages grew cosmopolitan. The great things of the intellectual world have been done mostly by the small communities.

On the other hand, many people in many parts of the world are possessed with the desire to resist the progress of the great steam-rollers that are flattening out racial, local, and parochial differences. They do not want to see, in Musset's phrase, a world beardless and hairless spin through space like a monstrous

pumpkin. In certain cases, as in Finland for example, the struggle has a political complexion; a subject people holds to what it believes will be the key to deliver it from its chains. But in most instances the motives are merely sentimental, a local patriotism such as preserves the speech and the literature of Wales; and the most remarkable of all these revivals, that of the Provençal tongue, is perfectly free from any suggestion of a racial hostility. "I love my village more than thy village, I love my Provence more than thy Province, I love France more than all," writes Félix Gras, one of the leaders in the movement, quoted by Mr. Downer in his excellent little book on Frédéric Mistral.¹ And Mistral himself, so eloquent on the need for fostering the local life, is eloquent too upon the need for racial union.

For the brook must flow to the sea, and the stone must fall on the heap; the wheat is best protected from the treacherous wind when planted close; and the little boats, if they are to navigate safely, when the waves are black and the air dark, must sail together. For it is good to be many, it is a fine thing to say, "We are children of France."

Unluckily, the movement nearest to my mind, the revival of the Gaelic tongue in Ireland, springs under less kindly auspices. Dislike of England as well as love of Ireland enters into it. Nevertheless, the resentment that encourages Irishmen

¹ FRÉDÉRIC MISTRAL, POET AND LEADER IN PROVENCE; by Charles Alfred Downer. London, 1901.

to promote national industries, to revive their ancient tongue, and to study their past history and store of legends, is a very much more useful feeling than the resentment which sits sullenly asserting that nothing but the Act of Union stands between Ireland and the millennium. And it would be misleading to assert that the feeling against England, rather than the feeling for Ireland, has been the spring of the movement. Protestants and Unionists have been prominent in it. In Belfast, where the Gaelic League has several thousand members, the president of the League is a Protestant; and one of the best known opponents of Home Rule, the late Dr. Kane, joined the League, saying that he might be an Orangeman, but he did not wish to forget that he was an O'Cahan. And many Irishmen, and others interested in the Celtic revival, will find in Mr. Downer's account of Mistral and the *Félibrige* a suggestive parallel which I shall endeavour to draw out, while giving some account of the *Félibrige* itself.

The Provençal speech, once the vehicle of a great literature, had lapsed, after the devastation of the Albigensian wars, into the position of a mere patois. A few peasant songs were still written in it, and before the efforts of Mistral and his fellows, Jasmin had composed in it poems which won the praise of Sainte-Beuve. Roumanille, a native of Saint-Rémy, born in 1818, conceived definitely the idea of saving from destruction the beautiful *langue d'oc*; and providence threw in his way the instrument. In 1845 he met with Frédéric Mistral, then a boy of fifteen, son of a farmer whose home lay near the village of Maillane in the plain at the foot of the Alpilles. The boy had already a tenderness for the speech in which

his mother sang her songs to him, and the ridicule of his class-mates in the school at Avignon only strengthened this feeling. Already he was trying to render into Provençal the Eclogues of Virgil which recalled so vividly to his mind the life on the plains of Maillane. Then he met Roumanille, who showed him his poems *LI MARGARIDETO* (*Les Marguérites*, the Daisies). Before this, any passage of modern Provençal that he had met in print had been only given as the grotesque dialect of clowns. He went home and began a poem; but his father sent him (like Ovid) from verse-making to study law. He returned home *licencié en droit* (called to the Bar, as we should say), and was given his freedom. Then the young man devoted his life, just fifty years ago, to the glorification of his native tongue. Mistral set to work on the composition of *MIRÉIO*, which appeared in 1859 and was hailed with acclamation by Lamartine, crowned by the Academy, and made the subject of Gounod's opera. The language was lucky; it had found a poet, who from the very first raised modern Provençal literature into an indisputable existence.

Dr. Douglas Hyde, who is the recognised leader of the Gaelic movement in Ireland, as Mistral of the Provençal, has not only collected folk-song, but has written many lyrics, and one charming poetic comedy; but there has not yet been accorded to his work any of the recognition which was from the first bestowed by great writers on the author of *MIRÉIO*, for the excellent reason that hardly any critic is in a position to judge it except through the medium of a translation. Irish literature will have a harder fight to establish itself than the Provençal. The Irish, in so far as they are, or have been, or may

become, a bi-lingual people, are so in a very different sense from the Méridionaux of France. Any one who knows French and Italian can with a dictionary and a few hints spell out the meaning of what Mistral writes; and the idiom, according to Mr. Downer, is so near the French that translation is nearly a substitution of word for word. The spelling too, as in all Latin tongues, offers no difficulty. But Irish is of course a language differing entirely in construction and vocabulary from English, and, to add to the trouble, is encumbered with a system of orthography subtle and logical indeed, but elaborate and cumbrous. The difference in the written character makes another obstacle, though a slight one. Practically, therefore, one may be sure that any prose or poetry produced in Irish will only be read by Gaelic speakers; if it makes its way to English students of literature, it will be only known as the Polish is through the medium of translations. But literature is not produced for export, and the greatest poets have written for a public that was, so far as they knew, strictly limited in numbers. It is safe to say that either of two things would save the Irish tongue from all danger of dying out. The first cannot be looked for,—a prohibition of its use. On the second, therefore, all hopes must be founded,—the appearance of a really great writer who should write in Gaelic.

That is, as has been said, where the revival in Provence was lucky. The poet came to hand at once; and, apart from MIRÉIO no one who reads even in a translation the noble PENITENTIAL PSALM called forth by the war of 1870 can question the genius of its author. But failing this special intervention of providence on behalf of a language, organisation has a

power, and there is much of interest and of profitable example in the proceedings of the Félibrige. What exactly is meant by this mysterious word most people are in doubt. Etymologies from the Greek, the Spanish, the Irish even, have been offered,—*philabros*, *philebraios*, *feligres* (that is *fili ecclesiae*), and so on. But the essential fact is that Mistral found an old Provençal hymn describing how the Virgin came upon Jesus among “the seven Félibres of the Law,” and adopted the word to designate the seven poets who came together on May 21st, 1854, to consult for the rehabilitation of the Provençal tongue. The Félibrige, or League of the Félibres, was not founded till more than twenty years later.

What then was Mistral's procedure? He took, to begin with, a living language that was spoken about him. The dialect of the troubadours was, it appears, the Limousin. Mistral took the dialect of Saint-Rémy, or rather of Maillane. But the first meetings of the Félibres were held to discuss questions of grammar and orthography; for the language they were to work in was one that had long ceased to be used for any literary purpose. Taking a single dialect for basis, this is what according to Mr. Downer they have done.

They have regularised the spelling, and have deliberately eliminated as far as possible words and forms that appeared to them to be due to French influence, substituting older and more genuine forms,—forms that appeared more in accord with the genius of the *langue d'oc* as contrasted with the *langue d'oïl*. . . . The second step taken arose from the necessity of making this speech of the illiterate capable of elevated expression. Mistral claims to have used no word unknown to the people or unintelligible to them, with the exception that he has used freely of the stock of learned words common to the whole Romance family of languages. These words, too, he transforms more or

less, keeping them in harmony with the forms peculiar to the *langue d'oc*. Hence, it is true that the language of the *Félibres* is a conventional literary language that does not represent exactly the speech of any section of France, and is related to the popular speech more or less as any official language is to the dialects that underlie it.

The same may, however, be said of any written language, and it is to be noted that as the movement has spread the different dialects included in its sphere have asserted their own claims, and since 1874 have been admitted in the competitions. But the point to emphasise is that the language of Mistral is based on a dialect, but a dialect purified and enlarged. For the poet, in his enthusiasm for the tongue of his birthplace, did not limit himself to demonstrating its fitness for literary uses. He spent, Mr. Downer tells us, a quarter of a century "journeying about among all classes of people, questioning workmen and sailors, asking them the names they applied to the objects they use, recording their proverbial expressions, noting their peculiarities of pronunciation, listening to the songs of the peasants." The result was his great dictionary *LOU TRESOR DOU FELIBRIGE*, which professes to contain all the words used in Southern France, with the dialect forms of each, their etymology, and synonyms. Grammar is included by giving the conjugation of the verbs, etc.; so are explanations as to customs, manners, traditions and beliefs. In short, Mistral made a dictionary not only of the language but of the culture of the people, which aims at including all that is necessary to the understanding of modern Provençal literature.

This brief account indicates sufficiently, I think, the character of the literary language written by the *Félibres*, and the means taken to develop it. The facts have a certain

resemblance to those of the Gaelic revival, but the difference is to the advantage of the Irish. If the Provençal tongue be worth reviving, then the Irish is much more worth reviving, as being the richest in records of any of the old Celtic tongues, any one of which has a continuous history going back for many ages before the dialects of Latin took shape even in common speech. Yet nothing is more hotly debated in Ireland than just this point,—the value of the language. In the summer of 1900 a Vice-Regal Commission sat to enquire into the subject, and the evidence given before it is vastly entertaining. It may be divided into two parts,—the evidence of Dublin University against, and the evidence of other Gaelic scholars in Ireland and on the Continent for the popular study of the language. So far as the outside public can gather, the history of Irish falls into three parts. First, that of the Old Irish, spoken and written before the great Danish invasions of about the ninth century. This tongue survives only in certain glosses on the margin of Latin manuscripts, but its linguistic perfection is the joy of philologists. Dr. Atkinson, the main champion of the Trinity College point of view, would desire to encourage the learning of Irish among students of philology chiefly for the sake of these remnants. Secondly, there is the Middle Irish spoken and written by all men in Ireland, settlers as well as natives, from the tenth century to the close of the sixteenth. In this, which is apparently related to the Old Irish as the tongue of Chaucer is to the Anglo-Saxon, there survives admittedly a very copious literature, much of it probably dating from centuries earlier, but re-shaped into the modified speech. This literature is of undoubted interest to archæologists; but about it two questions are raised. First, is it

desirable that a knowledge of it should form part of an Irishman's education? Secondly, will an Irishman be better qualified to understand it by knowing the existing Gaelic? Upon the first point Dr. Atkinson is emphatic. He is worth listening to, for, unlike Dr. Mahaffy who testified in the same sense, he knows the books about which he is talking; and in his opinion it was difficult to find a book in the older (that is the Middle) Irish "in which there was not some passage so silly or indecent" as to give Mr. Justice Madden (his questioner) "a shock from which he would never recover during the rest of his life." He offered to bring Judge Madden, or any of the Commission, to his rooms in college and administer to them a series of these shocks, but it is not recorded in the Report whether or not they went. All Irish literature he went on to say (by implication) is folk-lore, and all folk-lore (he said expressly) is "abominable." This is one of the opinions, and Dr. Atkinson is apparently unique in it and not a little droll. To a certain extent, Trinity College has dissociated itself from this wholesale condemnation of a literature which many distinguished members of its body have endeavoured to make known. The normal opinion of scholars, who have either not felt or have recovered from the shock, is that the traditional Irish sagas, as they have come down to us, contain much that is of interest and not a little beauty for any reader. And for the ordinary Irishman or Irishwoman, whom it is proposed to educate, or merely to delight, by the revival of these old tales, it will be found, I think, that the literature has a special appeal. I judge by myself; the memories that haunt the Irish mountains and shores, from Ben Bulbin to Ben Edair, waken my imagination with a more living touch than all that is told with

greater art of an alien Thessaly, and Tara is more to me than Camelot. France may admire Mistral; but it is for Provence that he describes the life and scenery of Provence, and for Provence that he weaves into his poems the history and traditions of his own country. The value of a literature lies in its power to interest, and no literature and no history can be to any country what are the history of its own race or the literature that sprang from its soil. Few serious thinkers will deny that every civilised man should be familiar with the history of his own race, and it is at least doubtful whether that familiarity is possible without a knowledge of the racial tongue. And it is not history alone that is needed. M. Darmesteter writes in a fine passage, translated by Mr. Downer:

A nation needs poetry: it lives not by bread alone, but in the ideal as well. Religious beliefs are weakening; and if the sense of poetic ideals dies along with the religious sentiment, there will remain nothing among the lower classes but material and brutal instincts.

Whether the *Félibres* were conscious of this danger, or met the popular need instinctively, I cannot say. At any rate, their work is a good one and a wholesome one. There still circulates, down to the lowest stratum of the people, a stream of poetry, often obscure, until now looked upon with disdain by all except scholars. I mean folklore, beliefs, traditions and popular tales. Before this source of poetry could disappear completely, the *Félibres* had the happy idea of taking it up, giving it a new literary form, thus giving back to the people, clothed in the brilliant colours of poetry, the creation of the people themselves.

With very few alterations, this should hold good of the work that is being done by the Gaelic revival in Ireland. It will be asked by Englishmen why these people, all of whom speak English, cannot find their account in English poetry. The

simplest answer is the fact : they do not, and they cannot. What they take from England is the worst, not the best ; and that is true even of the men of genius among them. Neither Carleton nor Banim was able to assimilate the virtues of English literature ; the merit in their tales lies in the Irish qualities, the defects lie in the tawdry and superficial tricks of style picked up from the flashiest models. Nor is this only true of Ireland. Mr. Baring Gould, in a recently published *BOOK OF BRITTANY*, devotes a page to Théodore Botrel, the son of a blacksmith, and a Breton poet. And this is M. Botrel's account of his own objects.

We are menaced with a great evil. Not only is the Breton tongue threatened, but the Breton soul itself. That flower of sentiment which was its beauty is ready to shrivel up at contact with a materialistic civilisation. Vulgar songs are penetrating throughout the land of the saints, brought home from the barrack and dropped by commercial travellers. I have done what I can to substitute for these depressing compositions something that shall smell of the broom and contain a waft of the soil.

The reason for the fact here attested, and attested by many witnesses in Ireland, is I think admirably given in a passage from Alphonse Daudet's words in commendation of Mistral's work, rendered by Mr. Downer.

It is a bad thing to become wholly loosened from the soil, to forget the village church-spire. Curiously enough, poetry attaches only to objects that have come down to us, that have had long use. What is called *progress*, a vague and very doubtful term, rouses the lower parts of our intelligence. The higher parts vibrate the better for what has moved and inspired a long series of imaginative minds, inheriting each from a predecessor, strengthened by sight of the same landscapes, by the same perfumes, by the touch of the same furniture polished by wear. Very ancient impressions sink into the depth of that obscure memory

which we may call the race-memory, out of which is woven the mass of individual memories.

That is the plea for the study of a literature based on the old traditions, the old history, and the old beliefs of the race, and written in the old tongue, but in the modern form of that tongue. Here again there is a conflict of opinion over the value of Irish. The written language altered materially after the break-up of the old order when Ireland was completely crushed and conquered under Elizabeth and James. Up to that time the order of the bards had subsisted as a professional literary class, and had rigidly maintained a literary idiom growing gradually more and more divorced from common speech. In the first half of the seventeenth century, in the general break-up, a man called Keating departed from the tradition and wrote in popular Irish a history of Ireland, and other works. That was the beginning (according to Dr. Hyde) of a new literature which circulated surreptitiously in manuscript throughout Ireland, and received continual additions both in prose and verse. These manuscripts abounded all over the country but more specially in Munster ; poverty, and the apathy born of poverty, did their work in Ulster and Connaught. Then came the blow of the famine, which fell chiefly on the Irish speakers, and the continuity of the literary tradition was for the first time snapped. The heart was out of the people, and for a time they made up their minds that the way of salvation lay in becoming Anglicised. The institution of National Schools killed out the hedge-schoolmasters, many of whom had taught in Irish ; the parents opposed themselves strongly to the use of Irish by their children, and a generation brought up without a knowledge how

to read or write Irish¹ lost the respect for the Irish manuscripts which were destroyed by thousands. Still the tongue survived, and as the people gradually recovered from the terrible blow, racial pride began to reassert itself; for this language-movement, whether in Ireland or Provence, is an expression of the love of country and tends to foster that historic spirit of true nationality which Lord Beaconsfield once attributed to the Irish. But, as was natural in the absence of a written literature, divergence of dialects accentuated itself; and one of the questions hotly fought out before the Commission concerned the very existence of the language. Dr. Atkinson denied that there was such a thing as a standard of the tongue; he refused the title of Irish to what Dr. Hyde wrote, it was "an imbroglio, a *mélange*, an *omnium gatherum*." Dr. Hyde retorted that an Ulster and a Kerry peasant talking Gaelic together differed no more in speech from one another than they would have differed when talking English; and further, that what he wrote in the idiom used by educated Connaught men could be understood and enjoyed by Gaelic speakers in any part of the island. He cited testimony which

¹ The rules of the Board of Education everywhere permitted a teacher to teach Irish-speaking children in Irish, but no attempt was made to see that this was done, nor to provide Irish-speaking teachers, though the advisability of doing so was repeatedly urged. The practice was almost universally to teach children who had never heard English spoken till they came to school the rudiments of reading and writing in English. The result was that the scholars learned little, forgot quickly what they learned, and became the illiterate peasantry that they are to-day. Now some attempt is being made to follow the precedent which has been set with great success in Wales, and teach Irish speakers through the medium of Irish. The Board of Education is, however, sluggish in the matter, and the outlying peasantry are as will be seen little touched by the revival as yet.

seems conclusive. It is much to be wished that Dr. Atkinson, who knows all languages, would institute a comparison between the Provençal as it was when Mistral and his fellows took it in hand and the Irish when Dr. Hyde began his work. To judge from Mr. Downer's book it would appear that the notion of using Provençal as a literary medium had dropped out of men's minds altogether till first Jasmin, and then Roumanille, took it up; whereas in Ireland there still was in oral circulation a large body of folk-song, and in manuscript a considerable quantity of stories and histories.

The question for the educational authorities to consider, whether they should or should not encourage the study of Irish among young people not born to speak it, has been reduced to three heads. First, that of practical or commercial utility, which may be at once set aside. Consideration of these ends usually defeats itself; and in any case I doubt very much whether the man who starts his career in Ireland would not be more helped by a slight knowledge of Gaelic than by a similar knowledge of French or German. None of the three will however probably ever bring him in a penny; shorthand would be more marketable. Secondly, that of the language's value as an exercise for the mind. Here the Trinity College experts deny its fitness to be a subject for study, while half a score of eminent scholars on the Continent, and, what is more to the point, eminent Celtic scholars with Welsh experience, affirm. Thirdly, that of its use as a key to literature. Here no one proposes to put it into serious comparison with French or German. But it may be urged that the experts overlook altogether the special value that Irish literature has for Irish people. The study begun

at school or college is by no means so likely to be dropped in later life as that of any foreign language; of its power of stimulating interest and intellectual enthusiasm the Gaelic League is there to testify.

This League is the most interesting and significant outgrowth of Nationalism that Ireland has seen in my time. It is not political, but it is national; that is to say, it aims at fostering by all means the distinct and separate national life of Ireland. It is in close sympathy with the industrial movement led by Mr. Plunket, and aspires, like Mr. Plunket, to keep Irishmen in Ireland by making life there more prosperous and more attractive. These two movements differ from others in that they are constructive not destructive; they do not cry *Down with everything*, or anything; they try to build or rebuild. In a sense the Gaelic League is the more interesting, as it is the less utilitarian, though any one who has followed the work of Mr. Plunket and his associates knows well that they appeal to men's more generous emotions as well as to their pockets. But, grossly considered, the industrial movement is like the Land League and its successors, a movement to put money into the pocket of Irish farmers and peasants. It differs from them in not proposing to do this by taking it out of the pockets of landlords. The Gaelic League aims at an object which is partly sentimental, if you like, but in reality educational in the highest degree,—at a revival of the national life on its intellectual side. It appeals to Nationalism in its finest form, and it has met with most response where Nationalism has in the past been least profitable. The townsmen have made nothing out of their principles, the farmers have pocketed a solid reduction in rent,

and a solid lump sum for tenant-right. It is the townsmen who are supporting the Gaelic League. Especially the whole class of Government servants, post-office clerks and the like, who were debarred from joining any political organisation, have thrown themselves into this with enthusiasm. The meetings of the different branches have of course a social character which has been heightened by the inclusion of the national songs and dances as part of the study, and a very excellent part. But substantially you find in Dublin, in Belfast, and in any other considerable town, groups of clerks, shopmen and domestic servants, coming together evening after evening to work at the rudiments of a very difficult language which to at least nine in ten of them is as strange as to any Englishman. The little primer *SIMPLE LESSONS IN IRISH* by the Rev. Eugene O'Growney, which I bought the other day (and a better planned introduction to the study of a language I have never come across) was marked *121s* *thousand*. It is fair to add that the fifth part of the same work was only in the thirteenth thousand. But let it be remembered that this whole movement is a growth of the last few years. Fifteen years ago, ten even, Dr. Hyde was a voice crying in the wilderness. Now he has not only his League with its far-reaching organisation (even here in London it has a membership of twelve hundred) but he has the Church at his back. Readers of Father Sheehan's *MY NEW CURATE* will remember the priest's opinion of the cheap literature that is hawked about; and the Church had wisely accepted the best means of combating this vulgarising and demoralising agency. And lastly the League has secured at least the formal support of Mr. Redmond and his party, many of whom are already

strong for it, though many, and those not the least influential, are by long habit inclined to think of nothing but the land-question in all its details, and (in shadowy outline) the parliament on College Green.

The movement, like everything else in Ireland (or for that matter like any other product of a generous enthusiasm) has its droll side; a new Daudet has a new Tarascon before him. On the whole I do not know that anyone connected with it is more ridiculous than the literary gentleman who perorates or writes in good set phrase for or against a language of which he knows nothing; this essay, some may say, is not a bad illustration. However, we shall probably all be compelled to come in, even Mr. George Moore and Dr. Mahaffy. We are run hard, though, by the Pan-Celts, who not contented with reviving the language, the airs, and the step-dances, seek also to resuscitate, or re-invent, the costume. Mr. W. B. Yeats, who has a fine vicarious sense of humour, solemnly warned the Pan-Celts that they were heading straight for collision with a force that could, if it knew its strength, wreck any movement and would certainly wreck theirs. They had reckoned, he told them, without the Small Boy, and on the Small Boy they would come to ruin. But Mr. William Gibson, Lord Ashbourne's son (for this seed sprouts in the most unlikely and most embarrassing places) defies the Small Boy, not only of London but his more formidable congener of Dublin. I hasten to add that the Dublin street arab sees no joke in the interchange of Gaelic salutations and (I am sure) smokes "Slainte" cigarettes with delight. We have not yet reached the stage when the names of all streets and railway-stations will be written up in Irish, but town-councillors who object to gladden the Gael with an alterna-

tive version incur a disagreeable publicity, and at least one railway-company has yielded to persuasion. Cricket is threatened with taboo (but the Irish climate already goes far in that direction) and so is Rugby football, a sport in which the Irish excel. Those, however, who advocate the disuse of the latter plead for some mitigation of the severity of the Gaelic game.

But these absurdities are only on the surface. Fundamentally the movement is admirable. It is allied with the industrial propaganda which every sensible Irishman applauds; it is allied with a crusade against the curse of drunkenness; it is allied with the attempt to create a national dramatic literature (as I have attempted to show in *THE FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW* for last month); it is giving to the people a keen intellectual interest, which is all the more likely to thrive because it is taken partly as a pastime, partly as an expression of the most genuine patriotism. And though the peasantry who have the language actually in their keeping, who are the true repositories of the national tradition, are slow to move, in Ireland as elsewhere, yet it is impossible that they can be long indifferent to the renewal of their language which they habitually discuss and appreciate as few Englishmen, but many Frenchmen, discuss and appreciate their own speech. More than once I have heard a Connaught man speak of the pleasure it was to hear such a one of his acquaintance recite a poem in Irish: "He had the right way of it, surely." And again and again I have heard them deplore the falling off among the younger folk in correctness of diction and even in accent. "They do not seem to be able to twist their tongues round it, the way we used to," one of them said to me the other

day. And in the last twelve months the change is notable: last summer in the West of Donegal no one had heard of the movement; this year in Donegal and Mayo alike there was nothing the people were more ready to discuss than the Irish teaching in the schools. I see no reason to doubt, but every reason to believe that there will come into being a new literature in the old tongue; and that literature will be as it was in Provence, the work of men with whom poetry or writing is a cult or passion, not a trade. Such men will turn with hope and emulation to survey the work done by Mistral and his fellow-workers; and to them may be commended the sonnet prefixed by Mistral to his great dictionary. I transcribe the sestet of it, to give the reader some notion of this splendid daughter of the Latin, with its sonorous double rhymes and profusion of stately words. Mistral speaks of his own work, and gives thanks like the ploughman or the shepherd on the eve of St. John.

En terro, fin qu'au sistre, a cava moun
araire;
E lou brounze rouman e l'or dis em-
peraire

Treluson au soulèu dintre lou blad que
sort. . . .

O pople dóu Miejour, escouto moun
arango:
Se vos reconquista l'empèri de ta lengo,
Pèr t'arnesca de nòu, pesco en aquéu
Tresor.

My plough has dug into the soil down
to the rock; and the Roman bronze and
the gold of the Emperors gleam in the
sunlight among the growing wheat.

Oh people of the South, heed my say-
ing: If you wish to win back the Empire
of your language, equip yourselves anew
by drawing upon this Treasury.

Under the speech of the peasants,
the speech that grows like corn in
the fields, lie buried treasures from
an older world of great kings and
great artists, the words and the
phrases and the thoughts of an
ancient and illustrious civilisation;
and these Mistral has brought again
to the light of day, no longer to "rust
unburnished," but to "shine in use."
Under the soil in Ireland also there
lie bronze and gold, and Dr. Hyde in
his ploughing may be as fortunate
as Mistral.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

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PRINCESS PUCK.

CHAPTER XXXV.

It was in June when the accident happened, early June, but the season was warm that year and already the little white roses were in bloom. They were in bloom the year of Theresa's marriage,—white roses for the wedding, and now, with but one other June to intervene, white roses for the burying. It was Bill who thought of this, not Theresa, although Theresa, smelling the scent of the flowers under the window, thought of her wedding-day as she sat waiting that night.

She shivered a little as she recollected; it may have been at her thoughts, it may have been with cold for the air was chilly. It was very late; she rose and going to the window closed it, shutting out the sweet scents of the night. Then she glanced at the clock,—how late it was!—past twelve,—Robert had never been so late before. Surely nothing could have happened to him? Nothing ever happened; he was late, that was all, and she sat down again with a set look on her face.

There was a letter in her work-basket; she had read it once, but something made her put her sewing down and take it from its envelope to read again. It was from Bella, who had gone to spend a few days with some relations of her husband's

at Kensington. How happy Bella seemed! How delighted that Jack was going to join her that day! It was such a pleasant letter, though it told little. Theresa read it and folded it, smiling as she did so; then for a moment she sat listening, thinking she heard the sound of a horse's feet. The road was not near, but the night was so still that she could almost have heard in her present state of tension. She might be mistaken, but there was certainly a sound of some kind. Wheels,—someone driving home—then she was mistaken, for Robert was riding to-night; this must be some other wayfarer, perhaps Gilchrist Harborough come down by the mail from London. She set herself to listen again; the sound of the wheels had passed now, the vehicle may have driven out of earshot, or it may have paused by the gate where the road was dark. The last must have been the case for, after a moment, she caught the sound again; perhaps the horse started suddenly, for the noise was much plainer now. It was coming nearer—surely there was not some one driving up to the house?

She rose quickly, a nameless dread at her heart, and went into the hall. There she paused a moment listening; the noise of wheels came nearer, then ceased, and through the closed door she heard, or her over-wrought senses told her she heard, the sound of a

horse breathing. A man came up the steps; she heard him as she stood there, her hand upon the door, nerving herself to meet she knew not what. He stopped, and she opened the door to find herself face to face with Gilchrist Harborough.

For a second he shrank from her, and in the starlight she saw it.

"What is it?" she asked with lips that seemed too dry to speak.

"Robert has been hurt," he answered, avoiding her eyes. "I—I have brought him home."

"Hurt?"

Her voice rang distinct, almost sharp, and Harborough knew the question she was asking herself, although she was too loyal to put it to him.

"Yes," he answered, meeting her eyes now; "he has been hurt, badly hurt, I am afraid."

"Badly? How badly?" Fear was whitening her face and quickening her perceptions. "You don't mean—oh Robert!—Why, I can see him out there! Robert!"

She passed Harborough and would have gone down the steps but he stopped her. "That is Dr. Bolton," he said gently; "I brought him with me. Robert is there,—but,—you can't see him."

She leaned against the door-post and caught her breath, searching his face with questioning eyes. "He is dead?"

He felt the words were spoken, though he hardly heard them. "Come in here," he said gently. He led her to the room she had just left, and put her unresisting in a chair.

"Dead," she whispered, "dead!" Her breath was coming in gasps, and she shook a little, but she did not cry or faint. For some reason Gilchrist was afraid to look at her; he moved to the door. "Are you going to bring him in?" she asked in that same low, breathless voice.

"Yes."

"Up-stairs?"

"It would be better." That was the doctor's voice outside; both the doors were open and he had heard what was said.

"You will want a light; there is none in the room."

She had risen as she spoke, but the doctor, seeing her white strained face, said: "No, no, wait here; Harborough will go up first, and set a light."

She paid no heed to him, but tried to light a little hand-lamp. Gilchrist took the matches from her trembling fingers and, lighting it for her, put it into her hand. She gave him a look of thanks and then went slowly up-stairs.

It was early the next morning when Bill received the telegram that summoned her to Ashelton. That Bill should be summoned both annoyed and surprised Polly; she objected to parting with her for one reason, and for another she considered that she herself was the right person to be sent for in an emergency. "I don't see what good you can do," she said.

But Bill did not argue the point; she looked at the time-table, and then went up-stairs to dress for the journey. Polly picked up the telegram and having read it again followed Bill. "'Come at once, Mrs. Morton wants you. Harborough.'" She read the message aloud to Bill when she reached her room. "What has Gilchrist got to do with it, I should like to know?"

"Robert is ill, I expect," Bill said. "If it were Theresa, Robert would have sent the telegram; but as neither of them did I expect Robert is ill."

"Robert ill!" Polly sniffed contemptuously, then with the air of a prophet who sees his evil prognostications fulfilled, she added: "It is

very likely you are right; he never was much good. Still I don't see why Gilchrist Harborough should telegraph for you; he has no connection with the matter, neither have you."

"Jack and Bella are away. I expect Gilchrist is looking after things; he would be very good in an emergency."

Bill got her dress out of the cupboard as she spoke, and Polly looked at the telegram again. "Robert's not ill," she said with sudden conviction; "he's dead!" Bill, from the wording of the telegram, thought it just possible too; still she did not say so, and Polly went on: "I always said he would die young and die suddenly; now he has done it, and probably left Theresa very badly off."

Bill was used to seeing Polly in moral undress by this time; the elder cousin did not always think it necessary to keep up appearances with the younger now that she knew how little the girl appreciated or was deceived by them. Bill had so often been treated to Polly's unvarnished opinion of late that she was not much surprised by her way of regarding the possible death of Theresa's husband.

"Really I never saw anyone so unlucky as we are," Polly was saying; "no sooner do we get Bella settled than we have Theresa thrown back on our hands. It is hard, just as we are beginning to get on a little too, and make things pay. You and I have worked things up and managed splendidly, and this is our reward! It seems to me that, manage as we may, we shall never reap any benefit from it. We can work, and it seems we always may. As for those Warings, I have no patience with them!"

"So it seems, since you won't wait to hear how Robert is before deciding not only his death but his widow's future as well."

"Oh, I know he is dead," Polly said irritably as she followed the younger girl down-stairs. And Bill felt nearly sure of it too, even before she got to Wrugglesby station and saw Sam, who had been sent to meet her. When she saw him there was room for doubt no longer.

On the homeward drive he told her all he knew about the accident. The master had gone to Wrugglesby yesterday and returned late; he was riding a skittish young horse and must have been thrown and probably killed on the spot. Mr. Harborough, who had come from London by the mail-train, drove home along the same road and found him, but it was thought he must have been lying there for several hours. Dr. Bolton had been called up and came with Mr. Harborough to Haylands; but it was quite useless, the master was beyond help when he was found; "and the Missus"—so Sam concluded—"was somethin' terrible, quite stunned, not sheddin' so much as a tear."

Bill could believe that; it seemed to her quite natural that Theresa should be stunned. But when she reached Haylands it seemed just as natural that Theresa, when she met her and put her arms round her, should burst into a paroxysm of weeping. Bill wept with her of course; it was her nature; but she wept for the pity of life's tangle, while Theresa wept for the husband dead last night and the lover dead months ago, for the widowhood of name which had fallen upon her now and the widowhood of heart which had fallen long before; wept for her grief and her loss and her double grief that the loss and grief were not greater, and for all combined till thought was vague and her heart was eased.

So she wept, and no longer dreaded that the world, seeing her grief,

should also see that which lay behind. She had feared lest the secret she had guarded during Robert's life should be revealed after his death. It was for this reason she would not have Polly or Bella or anyone but Bill,—Bill whose eyes were not quick to mark anything amiss. The others might discover or think, but Bill—no one minded Bill. And then, when Bill came with her sympathy and her pliant changing nature, there suddenly seemed no secret to hide, nothing amiss which could be marked—all was melted in a gush of tears.

Thus Theresa became widow indeed, and though she sorrowed as such she was all the better for the sorrowing. Quite unconsciously she turned to the girl, whom she still persisted in regarding as a child, for comfort and help. Bill gave all the comfort she could, listened when Theresa told her how Robert went out yesterday and she had not said good-bye; wept when Theresa wept over this omission and over the hundred trifles which seemed to speak of his presence still near,—his pipe on the mantelpiece, his whip behind the door, his dog waiting wistfully in the hall. Bill listened but she also worked, for that suited her best. Theresa was really prostrate with grief; so Bill assumed, by the quiet right of the one who can, the management of the household, and the management so assumed remained with her some time.

It was during the days which followed that Gilchrist Harborough found himself thinking that Bill, viewed in a light other than that of prospective wife, had something to recommend her. He had not seen her since the December day when she cancelled their engagement; but in the time that followed Robert's death he saw her often, for she

stayed at Ashelton till the summer was well advanced. Polly wanted her back in town, but she was obliged to allow that Theresa needed her more at Haylands. Very reluctantly she gave permission for Bill to remain; very reluctantly, with the wages Bill forfeited by absence, she hired a girl to help with the work. And Bill spent a second June at Haylands, very unlike the first, excepting only that she saw Gilchrist Harborough often, though even in seeing him there was one great and essential difference, for they met now on a new footing, a footing much nearer equality.

Jack was a good brother-in-law, but Greys was some way from Haylands and he, being but recently married and having besides a great deal of land to look after, found it somewhat difficult to give Theresa's farm the supervision it required. Harborough, living much nearer, had more time and possibly more inclination, for the lawsuit did not occupy so much of his attention just now; therefore he came often to Haylands that summer, and in coming, met Bill often, but always in her working capacity; a capacity, he thought, which suited her so well that he wondered how he had ever come to think of her,—the most able collaborator man could wish,—as wife.

But Theresa's domestic arrangement, admirable as she found it, did not suit Polly at all. To begin with she did not find the girl at all an efficient substitute for Bill, and to go on with she "wanted to know how it was all going to end." Bill also wanted to know that, not because she found the arrangement any less pleasant than did Theresa, but because it was her custom to plan several miles in advance of the elder cousin's range of vision. So, before Theresa had contemplated the future

as a working possibility, Bill had answered Polly's enquiries.

"I'm afraid," so she wrote, "things are not much better than you expected; Theresa will be left very badly off. Still, I think she will most likely have a little, so there is a certain amount of choice as to what is to be done; I have not properly talked it over with her so I do not know if she has any wishes. As far as I can see we three (she and you and I) must live together; we can't afford two houses, but together I believe we might live here or in town. If we stop here we should have to give up most of the land, only keeping enough for a certain amount of dairy work. The dairy, with pigs, poultry, and vegetable-growing, I reckon would keep us in food and pretty well pay the rent—I believe this could be made to answer. We could have a boarder in the summer if you liked. Of course the other choice is for you and me to go on as before and take Theresa in; I don't know what else can be done, unless she goes to Jack and Bella, which seems hardly fair."

Polly read this letter and digested it thoughtfully, and her thoughts, it is to be feared, were not so much for the common good as for her own personal comfort, and that did not incline her towards going to Ashelton. She preferred town to country; she liked her present life in many respects, and she certainly did not relish the idea of making pigs and poultry pay with Bill's assistance, not because she thought they would not pay but because she knew quite well that the assistance would be on the wrong side in such a venture. Theresa she did not consider in the matter, and fortunately for her Theresa had no very strong wishes; she did not greatly care whether she remained at Haylands or went to London; it seemed to her that her life had been

snapped and could go on as well, or as ill, in one place as another. Jack was in favour of giving up the farm, pronouncing Bill's scheme to be a mad one. Gilchrist, who knew Bill better, was not so sure of that; but he saw that it would entail much hard work on all, on Theresa, who in his opinion was not fit for it, as well as on Bill who was. Therefore, as the general voice was with Polly, she carried the day, to her own great satisfaction, and at Michaelmas the farm was given up.

It is not to be supposed that Bill remained undisturbed at Haylands all the summer. She was merely keeping Theresa company, and when Bella's husband spared her to do that for a time, Bill, very reluctantly, returned to town, to Polly and her domestic difficulties. It is hard, when one can do work and has half done it, that it should be taken away and given to another, who not only cannot do it but does not recognise that it exists to be done. Bill did not want her work recognised, but she did want to finish it; but since that was impossible there was no choice but to silently resign it half-finished, without a hope of its being anything but wasted by the one who came after. So she went back to town, and Bella, it is to be feared, fulfilled her anticipations; the seed plants died, the vegetables languished, the ducks laid away, and the poultry intermarried disastrously. Later on Polly went down to Haylands, for a rest, she said; and Bill did not ask her to look after any of her pet projects, thinking perhaps that it would only be useless. When Polly returned she did enquire how the fruit was that year, and was told that the trees were breaking with the weight of plums.

"Does no one pick them?" Bill asked.

"Some of them," Polly told her;

"but fruit fetches so little this year; it is not worth a man's time to pick it, at least so Gilchrist says, and he is managing everything, you know."

Bill was not thinking of Gilchrist's management but of private enterprise; Polly was thinking of something quite different and it was she who spoke first. "Did it strike you, Bill," she said, "that Gilchrist takes a great interest in Theresa and her affairs?"

"Yes, of course; he likes managing, and he does it thoroughly."

But this was not what Polly meant at all and she said so. "What I want to know," she concluded, "is, why did he begin it? Why does he do it?"

"Because it wanted doing, and because he can do it. Somehow or other the people who can do things always have to do them whether it is their business or not; they have a sort of right to the jobs that want doing."

This was not Polly's opinion. "It's my belief," she said, "that he has an interest in what he does."

"An interest? He does not get the profits."

"No," Polly retorted impatiently, "but Theresa does; that's his interest."

"Do you mean he is fond of Theresa?" Bill asked in astonishment.

Polly did, and explained herself at some length, without convincing Bill who, when she had come to the conclusion that this was only one of Polly's fancies, went back to the subject of the plums. Polly was not interested in plums, and when Bill asked if she and Theresa picked any, answered snappishly, "No, we did not; we did not choose to spend our days up ladders."

A recollection of last year lent viciousness to this remark; Bill remembered last year too and sighed. Had she been at Ashelton early enough very likely there would have

been a repetition of the plum-selling. But she was not there in time to do anything, for, though she did go down to Haylands to help Theresa to pack at the last, the fruit was practically over. It was a bad year for apples; there were hardly any in the orchard at Haylands, and Bill saw at once, when she went to look round, that there was nothing to be done with them. As for the plums, they were a real grief to her when she saw them lying rotten on the grass beside the branches which the heavy fruit had broken down.

"Gilchrist could not look after everything," she told herself, "and Theresa would not know."

After all, the waste of the plums did not trouble her so much as did the sight of the withered plants in the garden, and the raspberry-canoe, still loaded with shrivelled fruit, dried up for want of water. But bad as the garden was, it was not the worst, for in one short tour of the stackyard she found, besides the feathers of many untimely victims of stray cats, five lots of addled eggs laid and lost in the summer months. She had her last find of eggs in a basket on the Saturday afternoon when she went to the orchard to look for fallen apples. There were not many, but she picked up what there were and took the eggs to the ditch to throw them away to make room for the apples.

It was just then that Mr. Stevens came by. He was a busy man but he sometimes allowed himself a little holiday on Saturdays in September to shoot a friend's partridges; he had been shooting partridges that day and very good sport he had had to judge from the beaming good humour he was carrying back to Wrugglesby.

When he saw Bill he pulled up. "Good-afternoon," he cried; "I didn't know you were back. You haven't been over to see me; don't

you want to have a talk about your affairs?"

Bill came to the gate. "There isn't much to say about them, is there?" she asked. "I thought nothing much could be done at this time of year."

"Well, no, not much certainly; everybody is out of town now. Still, if you'd like to have a chat you might look in when you're in Wrugglesby; I'm not very busy just now."

"Thank you, I will if I have time; I am only here for a few days just to help Theresa to pack."

"Ah, of course, she is leaving soon, poor thing. Going to live in London with you, isn't she?"

Mr. Stevens felt very sorry for Theresa, of whose affairs he knew all that was commonly reported and a little more besides. He felt sorry for Bill, too, that afternoon; she did not seem to be so cheerfully and completely satisfied with life as usual.

"We must make the best of a bad job," he said encouragingly, "and look for better times. Let's hope your business will be through before Christmas," and he shook his reins as if he were going on.

"Do you think it could be done so soon as that?" Bill asked with animation.

"I dare say; I don't see why not, or at the latest early in the new year. Woa, my beauty!" and he pulled up again. "Mr. Briant is a rich man and can afford to fight as a poorer man could not; but you're too strong for him, and since the business of the divorce and remarriage was settled he knows it. It's my belief—though as I'm not professionally connected with the case perhaps you will say I have no right to an opinion—it's my belief Briant never suspected a second marriage. But owing to the rector's help you have incontestable proofs, and the other side haven't a case worth mentioning."

"Then you think it will be settled soon?" Bill asked. "I am very glad; and I am glad, too, that Mr. Briant is so rich that one need not much mind taking money from him; even if I win he will still have plenty left."

Mr. Stevens, though he was amused by her scruples, assured her that she might be quite easy on that score. "He'll have plenty," he said, "plenty, seeing that he has neither son nor daughter to take it after him. Bless my soul, he ought to be quite pleased to make provision for a young lady in that way!"

The lawyer laughed as he spoke and Bill laughed too. "I am afraid he won't see it in that light," she said.

"I'm afraid not either. No; I think if you win your case you will have to thank your good aunt's care in keeping old bills and letters and recipes for herb-tea. That is what will have the most to do with it, since she managed to keep with them several of old Roger's useless documents, and one valuable one. Yes, you will have to thank her for her care and Mr. Dane for his generosity. Good-bye, and a speedy success to you."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BELLA's baby was born in January, and Theresa went to Greys for the event. Indeed she went there a good deal before the event, for, if the truth must be known, life in London with Bill and Polly was not entirely successful. Two women who have each had a home of their own do not always get on when they come to share one between them. Bella wrote in November inviting Theresa to come to her, and Polly urged the acceptance of the invitation with unnecessary warmth. Theresa hesitated a while

as to her duty and then finally accepted it and went. "And a good thing too," Polly said frankly.

She said this to Bill when they were at tea on the afternoon Theresa left. Polly sat at her ease with her feet on the fender and her tea-cup on the hob; she liked this position, and she liked the table drawn on to the hearth-rug so that she could sit between it and the fire. Theresa did not approve of such things; she did not exactly say so, but she looked it, and when she set the tea-things she never pulled the table up.

"It's all very well, Bill," Polly went on to say. "Theresa may be a very nice person,—I dare say she is, but she does not do here, and if she is going to live here she will have to alter a good deal."

"She will settle down in time."

Polly had her doubts about that and expressed them; she also expressed a hope that Theresa would stay with Bella while the settling process went on. "The longer she stays there the better," she concluded. "Perhaps if she is there long enough and Gilchrist Harborough sees her often enough, he may marry her and take her to Wood Hall where she could be as elegant as she pleased without interfering with me."

Bill laughed. "You are in rather a hurry," she observed. "Theresa has only been a widow six months, and Gilchrist has not by any means got Wood Hall yet. You finish things off rather too quickly."

"I wish somebody else would," and Polly turned up her gown to preserve it from the fire.

"Don't be too hard on T.," Bill said rather sadly. "I don't believe she is more particular than she used to be; she always was,—well, you used to call it ladylike."

Polly ignored her own past attitude with regard to Theresa and only

remarked: "I could be ladylike if someone else did the dirty work. I should like to be ladylike; but some people can't have what they wish in this world; they have to work that others may."

"Poor old Polly! I'm so sorry you have had to do the stoves lately. That place on my finger is nearly well, and I believe I shall be able to do them again to-morrow."

"I'm not grumbling about you," Polly said magnanimously.

"What is the use of grumbling about anything?" Bill asked. "It may let off steam, but I believe it rusts the pipes. Don't let's talk about Theresa; let us talk about hats."

Millinery was a subject of perennial interest to Polly, but to-night she refused to discuss it. "I don't know anything about hats," she said; "how should I? I haven't seen anything but these four walls since I don't know when."

"Why not go to Regent Street to-morrow afternoon?" Bill suggested. "My finger is really quite well, so I can do the work and you have not been out for ages; take an omnibus to Oxford Circus and go and look at all the shops."

This was Polly's favourite recreation and invariable panacea for dullness, but she still refused to be cheered. "What is the use?" she said. "I shall only see a hat I want and can't afford."

"You will see some new way of trimming up your old one," Bill assured her; and though Polly persisted that she would not go, when the afternoon came she changed her mind and went.

It was during Polly's absence that the great news came to Bill. Mr. Dane brought it; he had come to town for a few days on business, he said, probably on her business. At

all events it was fortunate that his coming to town was at this time, for he was able to bring the news to Bill in person. Of course Polly received a formal intimation; Polly always received formal intimations and requests from the lawyers as did Mr. Dane; she was the guardian of the plaintiff, a person of importance, and he was a great factor in the case, more especially as the lawyers were his lawyers and the money his money. But Bill was only the "infant," so she was not greatly troubled with intimations and consultations; and she, in the first instance, was not the person to be formally acquainted with the decision of the court. Nevertheless she was the person to whom Mr. Dane came, even before Polly had received her legal information and while that lady was out looking at the bonnet-shops in Regent Street.

It was four o'clock when Mr. Dane came. Bill had no idea of seeing him when she went to answer his knock; and the sight of him standing on the doorstep in the November dusk was so unexpected that she forgot in her delight to wonder why he had come. She led him to the kitchen, their living-room now, and gave him Polly's shabby old armchair. She never thought of apologising; it was the best she had to offer and so needed no apology; moreover he was her friend and would expect none.

"Well, Princess," he said at last, —at first it had not seemed possible to speak of his errand—"what do you think brings me here to-day?"

Bill looked at him doubtfully for a moment. "I have something to tell you," he went on, and then her whole face became illuminated with understanding. "Oh, Monseigneur!" she said, clasping her hands with an eagerness begotten half of hope, half of fear.

"Yes, my child," he said gently,

"yes, you have won. That which Roger Corby gave as a price for wrong is paid back a hundred-fold; and you, you little Bill, are an heiress in your own right."

Bill gave a great gasp. "Thank God," she said, "it is in time! Thank God, thank Him very, very much!" And there followed a pause; perhaps she thanked the God who always seemed so close to her. When she spoke again it was in hushed tones. "It seems very wonderful," she said. And,—and I owe it to you!"

But Mr. Dane did not think she owed it all to him; perhaps he shared Mr. Stevens's opinion and thought she was the stuff that wins in any circumstances. As for the particular circumstances of this case he set them aside, and when she persisted, her voice quivering with emotion as she recounted all he had done, he still set them aside. "It seems a great thing to do, does it?" he said at last. "Ah, you are young; things look different when you are young. I am old and I have lived much and loved much, and outlived much too perhaps, and to me,"—and he put a tender hand on the glowing hair—"to me it does not seem such a very great thing to do for the child of my past, the daughter of consolation to me."

Then she said no more, but she kissed him with tears in her eyes. Afterwards they talked of this fortune, and what it would mean, and the debt that Bill thought she owed to the Harboroughs—to Peter Harborough, shot, to hide whose death the price which was the foundation of her fortune had been paid—to Kit Harborough, whose rival through an act of hers had learned the claim that he had made,—and to the old man, last of the Harboroughs of Gurnett, who slept in the little churchyard among the ferns where Roger Corby lay.

It was past five o'clock before Polly returned. Mr. Dane had left only a little while before, and she must have almost passed him at the end of the street, though, if she did, she failed to recognise him. She did not notice anything particularly until she reached her own house, and was surprised to see there were no lights at any of the windows. Miss Scrivens, who now occupied the drawing-room, must have fallen asleep and forgotten to ring for the lamp; and Polly decided, with some satisfaction, that Bill for once had followed her instructions and not taken the light until it was rung for. With a gratified feeling at this unusual display of obedience she let herself in and went up-stairs; while she was up-stairs the drawing-room bell rang sharply and Bill went to answer it. She was still attending to the lamp, or the lady, when Polly entered the kitchen and found to her surprise that the tea-tray was not set.

"What has the girl been doing?" she muttered as she went to the dresser. She was reaching up to get a jug from a high hook when there came a dancing step behind her and, before she could look round, Bill's arms were thrown round her neck from behind and Bill's strong hands took hers prisoner.

"Polly!" she exclaimed, possessing herself of the jug and then twisting Polly round. "Polly, dear old Polly! It has come at last! You shall have the finest hat in all Regent Street even if it's a salad of roses with a cockatoo rampant on the top! You shall have it and we will drive all the way in a hansom cab to buy it!"

"Bill! What is the matter with the girl? Bill, put down that jug and tell me what you mean!"

"I mean,"—but Bill did not put down the jug, she filled it with milk

instead—"I am going to get Miss Scrivens's tea," she said. "I ought to have got it before only I have been hindered this afternoon, and I'm crazy, I think. But, oh, Polly! I've got it, got it at last; the money I mean, or at least as good as got it, it is going to be mine. I expect you will have to do things and sign things first, but the case is decided for us and it is all as good as mine already!"

"My dear Bill!" Polly was momentarily overwhelmed by the news, then she recovered herself and fetched a tin of sardines from the cupboard. "Oh, well," she said, "if that's the case we can afford to have a relish with our tea."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN the opinion of certain members of the Chancery bar the conclusion of the Harborough case was disappointing, for from a legal point of view there was no conclusion. In spite of all that had been said on both sides, all the facts and traditions and curious crooks that had come to light, the case was in the end as far from a legal decision as ever; it was merely withdrawn. This was the best thing possible for the litigants and certainly the wisest; still, it was to be deplored, for a decision would have been interesting. Apart from the legal aspect the conclusion could not be regretted; the buying of the claimant was undeniably wise, and at the same time almost romantic, for there was something of mystery about it. Nobody, not even the Harboroughs, knew who paid for it. Someone, whose name was not mentioned and who apparently had no personal interest in the case, found the money, which Gilchrist accepted in lieu of his chance of the Gurnett estates, and for the consideration of which he duly undertook that neither

he nor his should ever raise the claim again.

Thus it happened, when the case was well on in its second year, that all ended and came to nothing, and Kit Harborough found himself very much where he used to expect he would be; but with an addition he did not expect in those days, — a certain price to pay for having defended his right to be there. Gilchrist had something to pay too, but it did not so much matter to him for he had thought of the costs when he bargained for the price of his withdrawal. On the whole he was satisfied with the terms; they were not so high as he had tried to get, but they were all his chance was worth to him, and all, apparently, that the benevolent person unknown was willing to pay.

There was one man, in no way connected with the case, who took a keen interest in that benevolent person unknown; not so much at the time, but a little later. In the light of subsequent events Mr. Stevens chose to find that individual most interesting. "Unless I am much mistaken," he once said, though wisely in no one's hearing but his own, "there is stuff for a good Chancery suit in that buying off of Gilchrist Harborough. Certain persons have been juggling with the law, or I'm a Dutchman; persons, too, who should have been above suspicion. Mistress Wilhelmina has a deal to answer for, bless her wicked little heart! I wonder how it was done! I'd give something to know." But he never did know; only, in later years, he used sometimes to doubt if there had been much juggling with the law after all; if it had not been that a certain childless old man, who was so much richer than most people knew, had not chosen secretly to serve a girl in his life instead of benefiting her after his death. But of this fancy Mr.

Stevens never spoke, for he knew, if it were true, that it was a secret hidden even from the girl herself, and he, though only a country lawyer, was a man possessed of that best wisdom, the knowledge when to keep silent.

But all this was long after; at the time when the Harboroughs' suit was concluded no one even suspected who their benefactor might be. The Harboroughs themselves puzzled over it for some time and then, as is the nature of man, turned to the consideration of their own affairs. Those affairs were identical for both of them in one particular at least,—the question of Gilchrist's return to Australia. It was generally understood among those whom it concerned that Gilchrist was going back to Australia; he had said he should go so soon as the case was settled, but now when it came to the point he did not seem so sure about it. Kit took a most surprising interest in his rival's departure, and he noticed his hesitation directly the subject was introduced. There was only one occasion when the two Harboroughs spoke of the matter, the only occasion on which they met on purely social terms, the day they lunched together at Wood Hall. Kit had invited Gilchrist there as it were to shake hands after the fight, possibly feeling it his duty to do so. Gilchrist accepted the invitation, partly for similar reasons, and partly because he had never been inside Wood Hall and thought he would rather like to see the old house for which he had been fighting; coming with this motive, there is no doubt he also came prepared to observe critically and to put a market-value on all he saw.

"I think I have the best of the bargain," he told Theresa afterwards; "the place is in bad repair and at the best of times would take a lot

of keeping up. Still, I admit it has a charm of its own, a charm which cannot be bought or exchanged, and would not, I believe, stand a change of ownership. If the house were mine I should do it up, and, I suppose, change its nature; since it is his, he will let things remain as they are; he can't afford to do anything else, poor beggar! But he will keep the charm and a few absurd, inimitable, medieval prejudices which even an enlightened education cannot make us altogether despise."

It is to be feared that Gilchrist was not far from the truth in his estimate of the poverty likely to reign at Wood Hall. The estate, crippled before, could ill afford the money spent in defence of its owner's claim to it. Kit knew this, and knew that the Australian was quick to mark signs of prosperity or decay.

The two Harboroughs did not lunch in the big dining-room where Kit had sat with Bill on the day that old Mr. Harborough died, but in a smaller, more modern room where neither length of possession nor shortness of means stood out so plainly. There was little here to suggest that evil days had fallen upon the old place, excepting only the view from the windows. Gilchrist glanced out once; the pale February sunlight was wan on the crack in the stonework of the terrace, on the unswept leaves of the autumn and the untouched borders by the wall. Unconsciously he looked towards his host and observed him curiously—the well-bred, stoical face, the grave eyes, the well-finished hands—the whole man which told so little.

"Are you going to live here?" he asked suddenly.

"Probably not."

There was a moment's silence. Kit was evidently not communicative on that subject, and Gilchrist looked out of the window again before giving

expression to the thoughts in his mind. "Pity the old place should go to pieces!" he said at last. "I could have saved it—spoiled it, perhaps you would have said—still, saved its life after a fashion, but you—"

"I shall probably go abroad for the next twenty years; after which, if I am not an inveterate wanderer by that time, I shall come home and think about getting some bricks and mortar to mend the hole in the terrace which we can see so well from here."

Gilchrist laughed, although he was a little annoyed; he had felt vaguely sorry for Kit and the decline of the house of Harborough. But Kit kept him well at arm's length, and the house of Harborough was plainly not his concern, so he withdrew his sympathy from the end he had himself hastened, and the subject was pursued no further.

It was then that Kit enquired concerning the return to Australia, and learned that there was a good deal of uncertainty connected with the date of Gilchrist's departure; indeed, it seemed almost possible that he would not leave England at all that year. Kit did not ask why; he knew that it was a woman's will and a woman's preparations that ruled the time of the Australian's going. Herein he was quite right, though he was not right in thinking that woman Bill Alardy. Bill's preparations, like her will, were never long in making; but the woman for whom Gilchrist waited was different; who is to hurry a nine months' widow, and who make love to the wife of a man whose grave has not long been green?

But of this difficulty Kit knew nothing, and since he was very well aware that Bill's betrothal was of a private nature, he could not make any remark upon it even had he

wished. So he was still unenlightened as to the name of the woman whose pleasure Gilchrist waited when a little later the Australian took his leave.

Kit went to the door with him, stood on the step looking after him even when he was out of sight, stood there until the sound of his horse's feet had died away in the distance. The sun was gone now; ashy clouds had crept over the sky, and all the world was still and grey with the soft, tired look of endless afternoon. Kit passed down the steps and walked slowly past the west front of the house; once he glanced up at the crooked windows and the sloping, many-peaked roof, but he looked away again quickly as if the sight hurt him. He reached the end of the terrace but he did not go back; instead he wandered aimlessly across the lawn, down the rose-walk, past the box-edged beds and the yew trees once trimly clipped into quaint devices. The devices were lost now, the clipping having been left undone for many years. Bill had once said that, were the trees hers, she would learn to clip them herself rather than that they should be neglected. So she would, too; she would have clipped the trees and weeded the paths and saved the house from its approaching decay. Gilchrist had said that day he would have saved it; how could he fail to save it with her for wife? Old Harborough himself had testified that she, and such as she, penniless though they might be, alone could save an exhausted family, a proud, poor, worn-out race.

Kit had come to the outskirts of the wood now; he stopped for a moment, not from indecision as to which path to follow but because he wished to call a halt in his mind and force himself to face the truth. Why should he pretend to look upon Bill

as the saviour of his family, the prop of his house? It is true she could have been all that, but it was also true that she was something else to him; not prop nor saviour, but the only woman the world held. He had been but a boy eighteen months ago when he first looked into her eyes; he had grown to manhood in those eighteen months, but it did not matter, the look thrilled him still. He had not seen her since that October day when they pledged each other to duty, but he had not forgotten; he would never forget; there are some it is not easy to forget.

He had been following the footpath that led from the gardens to the little church, but he turned away before he reached the low boundary wall and wandered on through the waste of dead bracken till he struck the public footpath which gave upon the lane by a swing-gate. There was someone standing by the gate, someone with arms resting upon the topmost bar, and eyes fixed, not upon the path with its approaching figure, but upon the leafless tree-tops of the wood.

For half a second Kit paused, a sensation almost of fear at his heart—how could she be here in the flesh? Then, at a bound he had reached the gate; flesh or phantom, he must see her, must touch her hand once again.

"Bill!"

He had put his hand on the hands on the gate. They were warm, living hands; he held them fast and there was no effort made to draw them away. She did not start nor cry out; she did not move at all; she only looked up at him, silent yet with throbbing breast. So they stood, the gate between them, for the space of a full minute, and the world seemed to hold but them alone.

From the main road there came the sound of horse's feet, steady, slow-going, some farm-horse on its way to

the blacksmith's in the village. The sound of hoofs recalled to Kit the last time he had heard it and recalled also the thought of the man who had ridden away from his house not an hour ago. He dropped the hands he held almost as if they burnt him.

"He cannot—shall not have you!" The words were hardly spoken; they seemed wrung from him against his will.

The discarded hands pulled a splinter off the gate. "He,—he doesn't want me"—their owner seemed much interested in the splinter.

"Not want you? You—"

The gate was between them no longer.

A while later, the farm-horse, having been to the blacksmith's, was led home by way of the lane; the man who led him saw no one about the lonely spot; there was no one by the swing-gate or on the foot-path going to the church, no one visible at all. In the shelter of the leafless wood, however, there were two who explained many things. There were many things which needed explanation they found,—the mystery of Bill's freedom, for one, and Kit's ignorance of it, for another. The first was easy to recount; the second Bill found harder to explain.

"I could not tell you," she said at last; "of course I could not tell you. Do you know the feeling, the consciousness, almost, that you can have and get whatever you make up your mind to have? That has been my feeling so long; but I was afraid to seek for this; I wanted it to be the free gift of God to me; I wanted it an unsought gift or not at all. Do you understand what I mean?" And in case he did not she went on to give another reason. "I have been getting so much lately," she said, flashing a

shy smile at him; "getting and willing and taking that I think I wanted someone to take me."

And it is to be presumed that Kit understood the art of taking her, for the next explanation did not follow immediately. When it did come it had reference to Bill's unexpected appearance at the gate that afternoon.

"There is no mystery about that," Bill said. "I came to look at a house at Sales Green. We are thinking of moving in the spring or early summer and we are looking out for a house with a large garden somewhere in this part—the garden is for me, the house for Polly, the part for Theresa who wants to be near Bella. However, the Sales Green house is no good at all; we shall have to look out for another."

"Did you come from town to-day?"

"Yes; Bella met me at Wrugglesby and drove me to look at the house and then home with her to lunch. Afterwards I started to walk to the rectory, having promised to go to tea with Mr. Dane; he is going to drive me to the station this evening."

"You do not seem to have chosen a very direct route to the rectory."

"No," Bill was obliged to admit; "but I thought I would like to go down the lane once more and,—and I did not know you were at home."

Kit showed the utmost satisfaction in having been at home on this occasion, and they passed on to the next explanation which was of a different nature and was given by Kit. It had to do with his prospects and the narrow means he had to offer; the thought of them made him remember, now it was too late, that he had but small right to ask her to share his lot.

"Don't you know?" Bill exclaimed eagerly almost before she had heard him out. "Haven't you

heard? I have got money now,—oh, I am so glad! I thought perhaps Mr. Briant would have told you, but I suppose he thought you had worries enough of your own.”

Perhaps this was the case; at all events, as Mr. Briant had not told the tale in full, Bill told it now, and with it the name of the unknown benefactor who had put an end to the Harborough suit. Possibly she did not tell it well, certainly Kit was astonished almost beyond comprehension.

“You?” he said and he stood to look at her. “You did it?”

“Yes,” and she stood still too, twisting a dry twig she held. She snapped the brown thing nervously. “I’m sorry, Kit,” she said humbly. She knew that it is not always easy to receive a favour. “I’m sorry, but there did not seem anyone else to settle it, and it had to be done. I know it is hard to take things from a woman but,—do you mind so very much from me?”

Kit’s throat swelled painfully. After all, he was very much a boy still; but he took the favour and the giver of the favour all in one.

Later, as they went up the forest path together, he asked her what she would have done had he not met her at the gate that day. “It is all very well,” he said, “to say that you have saved Wood Hall for yourself as well as for me, but supposing I had not met you to-day, supposing I had never learned you were free?”

“Then I should have gone to live in a house with a big garden and grown tons of cabbages.”

Kit laughed. “But tell me,” he persisted, “would you have never let me know?”

She shook her head. “I had made

up my mind to tell no one,” she said, “only Polly assured me that if ever I married I would have to tell my husband; for one reason because he might find out if I did not, for another because it would be wrong to hide things from him. For the first reason I do not care, I would have risked that; but for the second it is different. I am not afraid that you will misunderstand, and it seems a pity to begin with secrets.”

“Yes;”—Kit had possessed himself of the small strong hand,—“a great pity since we are to have all things in common.”

And so they passed through the silent wood where the shadows lay, brown and purple and deepest blue; they followed the wet path still studded with the autumn’s funguses, crossed the deep hollows where last year’s leaves glowed in the even light, under the old trees, twisted pollards and stately beeches, and so on, up the hill. Once a startled jay flashed from the covert of a thorn-bush low down across their path; once a rabbit looked out from among the beech-roots; nothing else moved, and in the stillness of a holy world they came to the gardens and to the house.

Together they went by the western front to the great door still open as Kit had left it; together they entered the wide, dim hall. Kit turned as he stood on the threshold and looked up at the old house. “Not yours nor mine,” he said, “but ours, sweetheart.”

But the diamond-buckles came to Kit Harborough’s wife after all, for they were given to her on her wedding-day by one who still called her “Princess Puck, child of the Lord’s consolation.”

THE CAPTURE OF HASSEIN.

(SOME NOTES OF A CRUISE IN EASTERN WATERS.)

ATHWART the course of the Outward Bound in the dim and distant East stands an outpost of the British Empire. Strong with the strength of a natural position it has been made yet stronger by the hand of man, who has called in all that modern science can achieve to make it an impregnable barrier to the foe. Here, as in the Island Valley of Avilion,

There falls not rain nor hail nor any
snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly.

But here resemblance ceases, for the demon of heat has chosen this great fortress as his own especial domain. Sometimes in London we seem to think that we know what heat is when the thermometer turns into the eighties, and street and square, mansion and office, park and garden, ay, even the river itself, seem to melt with fervid heat. And at these times it undoubtedly is hot, and one cannot wonder if the world grumbles. But it is a phase, it passes; there comes a thunderstorm and heavy rain, and we are all out and about congratulating one another on the freshness of the atmosphere after the great oppression.

But what of the place of which I speak? Let us call it Paradise, as one name will do as well as another. Here heat is normal and coolness never. It is true that winter is not so hot as summer, but it is a deal hotter than one could wish for, and

the mischief is that you know that it is certain to be hotter, and you feel at the same time a maddened impatience with the knowledge. Out of the smooth oily sea Paradise flings its giant bulk a sheer three thousand feet towards the burning sky. No tender green veils its rugged slopes; no snowy cap delights the eye with a suggestion of coolness. Stark and bare the black volcanic mass receives the heat of the tropic sun all day, and all night it gives forth what it has absorbed. On one side is a bay, on the other the open sea, and on a third burning desert-sand,—everywhere sand and black jagged volcanic rock, an aching, glaring desolation. Such is Paradise.

And of the inhabitants thereof? An outpost really of the Indian Empire, it is governed from India. There is a Governor, there are the political or Civil Service men, the Army, the Navy, and the natives. Let us take them in rotation. The Governor comes first, an Indian Brigadier, upright, slightly grizzled, with the hair a little worn at the temples from much use of the solar topee; courteous, debonnair, a perfect host, a type of how India turns out a soldier and an English gentleman. Then comes the Civilian, silent, strenuous, self-denying. These men know responsibility, of which they have much, power, of which they have little, and work of which they have a superabundance. Also they know fever occasionally, and prickly heat always, and maddening, torturing boils, the

outcome of the climate. I, who write, have known all these three and it has not diminished my admiration of the Civilian and the way he works through them all. Enter his office; it is ten in the morning; outside the rocks quiver and glow in the shadeless glare and the sand burns one's white shoes. There, in what shade they can get, proof against sun and heat, loll native orderlies and messengers, barefooted and in quaint uniforms. Inside the darkened room the thermometer marks 98°, and the heavy leathern punkah paddles the lifeless air. At his desk sits the Civilian and on his left stands the Babu or Parsee clerk with papers, and papers, and ever more papers. The Civilian's hair is turning grey, but more from toil than age. All day this cog in the great wheel of administration is grinding the mill of government, and when, tired-eyed and sweating, he enters the club at six in the evening he counts himself a fortunate man if he is not going to be at his desk again after dinner until midnight.

Then the Soldier; infantry, British or Native, gunner, sapper, departmental man, all have their work to do, and do it. Undeclared as ever, the officers play polo on most indifferent ponies, rackets in a court which is more like the hottest room of a Turkish bath than anything else, and shoot clay pigeons on the beach. Sometimes they go on leave to the mainland and shoot many lions. I know one subaltern who shot eighteen in a fortnight,—but that was a record. I also know one into whose tent at night came a wandering lion. The beast made a grab in the dark, grabbed the pillow from under the young man's head and then retired to eat it. The subaltern did not grudge his pillow; he said that it must have been such a jolly sell for

the lion! Also I know a colonel,—only the lion caught him and bit him clean through the middle of his right hand—that was all. Old shikarries at Paradise laughed grimly and told him that it was damned lucky it wasn't a Bengal tiger, as *he* would not have been content with a hand only. These may sound like travellers' tales, but I can only say that they are all literally true. Somehow one never meets the fashionable regiments at Paradise; His Majesty's Guards do not affect it, nor do any of those others which we could all name, and we had a mind to. But Infantry of the Line, Gunners, and Sappers have to put in a spell there, and so to those whose friends are not in high places falls the lot of guarding this priceless possession. The life of the British private cannot be of much value to its owner at Paradise. Parades and bathing, a certain amount of languid cricket, and as much cool drink as his limited resources admit of, must make up the sum total, varied by those periodical visits to hospital in which all the inhabitants share.

The natives, who all appear so much alike to the eye of the casual steamship passenger are in reality of many and varied races,—Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, from all the knowable and unknowable parts of the adjacent continent they come, a strange, many-coloured crowd exhibiting an extraordinary diversity of savage and semi-civilised life. But the native proper of Paradise is a fine fellow, copper-coloured, erect, and muscular, he has the swing of the free man in his gait, the look of the free man in his eye. Many Eastern native races take a beating from a white man as a matter of course; but the white man who raises a hand against a native of Paradise does so at the risk of a broken head.

Of the ladies who have been condemned by Fate and their husbands' fortunes to live at Paradise it is difficult to speak without a lump in one's throat. That men of our race should endure such things is inevitable; but to see delicately nurtured women suffering that awful climate is a thing to weep over. Brave, steadfast, and uncomplaining, they face it and, uncheered by the presence of their children, they live from day to day an example of the heroism which suffers and endures.

I have left the Navy until the last as although it forms an integral portion of the life at Paradise, still the units which compose it are only visitants to her shores. A stay of some months, and then a joyful farewell and the ship is off to new scenes and better climates. Some years ago a great European Republic entered into war with an Eastern Potentate, and this war necessitated the readjustment of the hairspring balance of Naval Power. In the course of this readjustment the ship which I then commanded was ordered from a more desirable,—a very much more desirable—station to Paradise. Long and loud were the repinings in the officers' mess, and lurid were the adjectives on the lower deck. However, in the Navy "we growls and goes" as Jack says, and one fine morning, about two hours after sunrise, we found ourselves steaming into the bay at Paradise. The signalman, who has had his glass glued to his eye for the last ten minutes, skips up the bridge-ladder and salutes the First Lieutenant.

"SEA SERPENT at anchor, sir, flying 'the demand.'"

"Hoist our number," says that officer, and three round balls wriggle quickly up to the mainmast head; arriving there they break and three flags, announcing our name to our senior officer, flutter out on the light breeze.

"Signal to anchor as convenient, sir," reports the signalman, and shortly after the best bower takes the water with a mighty splash. The Captain's galley comes alongside and a few minutes after I am shaking hands with my brother Captain of the SEA SERPENT on his quarter-deck.

"Well, thank God you've come, and I'll be out of this the first thing tomorrow morning," says that worthy. "But come down below and I'll tell you all that you're likely to have to do here."

A steward appears with a tray. "Say when,—got enough ice? Now sit down in that long chair and light a cigar, and I'll tell you all about it. Ever heard of Oolad Boaziz?"

"No," said I; "is it a new American drink?"

My host grinned. "It's something a dashed site hotter than that; it's a coast tribe in these parts who don't seem to appreciate the blessings of diplomatic intercourse with the British Raj."

"What have they been up to?" I interjected.

"Well, you see it's like this; they are the proud possessors of a chieftain called Hassein, and I must say that for a native of the boundless and burning desert, who never wore a pair of trousers in his life or slept under a roof, he displays an abnormal and very creditable amount of cunning. The Oolad Boaziz live along the coast here about a hundred and fifty miles to the eastward,—you know how straight the coast runs hereabouts?"

I signified assent.

"Well," he continued, "just where these gentry have their headquarters a bluff of sand runs out at right angles to the coast and juts into the sea, and at the base of this bluff stands a fort which is owned by Hassein, the chief of the tribe. What

the fort is composed of I don't know, but from Hassein's swagger, which I am just going to tell you about, we think that he has at all events good rifles and could stand a long time against infantry. You know that on the mainland the Great Republic has acquired several posts on the littoral and hold as much of the *hinterland* as the native nigger will let them; and you are also aware of the inconvenient manner in which they stravage about hoisting their flag in all sorts of inconvenient places. It occurred to the Powers that Mr. Hassein's fort might prove a very convenient place for one of these hoistings; accordingly we entered into a convention with Hassein to the effect that we would pay him thirty rupees a month, and that in return he should on the approach of any vessel near his fort hoist a Union Jack with which he was provided for the purpose. A rumour somehow got about that Hassein had gone over to the mainland, and was intriguing with the agents of the Great Republic. Accordingly a ship was sent to the fort to find out if Hassein was there, and if there, what he was doing. It appears that it was right enough about Hassein's intriguing with the foreigners, but the agents of the Great Republic are a bit more wide-awake than Mr. Hassein had bargained for, for they knew all about his convention with us, and kicked him out contemptuously. Accordingly Hassein returned home in a very evil frame of mind. You see, he thought that, if one party was fool enough to give him thirty rupees a month to hoist a flag, perhaps he might find the other party equally idiotic, and naturally he had a complete disregard for the colour of the flag he hoisted. So when the vessel arrived at the fort to make investigations, not only did Hassan refuse to

hoist the flag, but he roundly declared that, if they did not clear out, he would fire upon them. The ship, not being a man-of-war, naturally retired discomfited, and now the Governor has decided to bring Hassein to his senses, and has asked for the co-operation of the Navy for that purpose. There, that's the whole yarn and a precious long one it is, but I could not pitch it any shorter."

Very early next morning the SEA SERPENT departed, and we were left the only representative of the Navy at Paradise. Then ensued councils of war as to how to catch the wily Hassein, the great thing being not to scare the bird beforehand, as if he made tracks for the interior we should never see him again. Accordingly we arranged that a party of soldiers should be embarked and, steaming along the coast in the dark, should effect a landing on the peninsula and surround the fort before daybreak. Our part was to arrive off the fort at early dawn, and hold ourselves ready for contingencies. With us came the Political Officer who was, of course, really in charge of the whole expedition. So arranged, so done,—and when we arrived we found a close cordon of Native Infantry soldiers squatting round on the sand encircling the fort, and a group of bewildered Oolad Boaziz chattering in their midst. Having anchored as near to the shore as the water permitted, which was quite close in, the Navigating Lieutenant and I, who had been up all night, dropped down the bridge-ladder in search of baths and breakfast. These important matters disposed of, I was requested by the Political Officer to accompany him on shore.

"What do you want me for?" I said. "It's your show now, and I'm only here to knock the fort down in case you consider it necessary."

However, seeing that he was bent

upon my coming, I gave in and having manned and armed a cutter we pulled to the shore.

"I see that the durbar has begun," said the Political.

"The *what*?" said I.

"The durbar," he replied.

Oh, for one more shattered illusion! I had always pictured a durbar as something connected with palm trees, elephants, golden howdahs, gorgeous turbans, the light of the harem, &c., The reality now in view, consisted of a Captain of Native Infantry, an interpreter, and a sub-chief of the Oolad Boaziz sitting on biscuit-boxes on the verge of a howling desert and surrounded by naked savages. The Political and I landed and joined the durbar, but before assuming my seat on my allotted biscuit-box, I called the crew out of the boat and told the coxswain to station his men all round me and the other officers. I had known a brother-officer stabbed to death in the back by savages on the coast of Madagascar some years before, and thought it well to take precautions, especially in view of our mission. And so began the durbar. The sub-chief, Mahomed, a rather handsome, middle-aged man and looking much less of a savage than the rest of his tribe, began the proceedings with the rather superfluous observation that it was a fine day. As the thermometer would probably have burst like a shell had it been exposed to the sun that we were sitting in, no one gainsaid the proposition. He next observed that he was glad to see us and expended a good deal of Eastern hyperbole in statements which were so obviously untrue as to need no comment. The Political cleared his throat and twisted his moustache.

"Interpreter."

"Sahib?"

"Tell that man that we have come here to find Hassein."

"Yes, Sahib."

Here ensued a prolonged colloquy between the chief and the interpreter.

"Well," said the Political impatiently "what does he say?"

"He say," slowly repeated the interpreter in an exasperating drawl, "he say his name Mahomed and he uncle to Hassein."

To the unprejudiced listener Mahomed seemed to have taken a considerable time to make this simple statement.

"You tell him," roared the now justly incensed Political, "that I don't want to know anything about Hassein's relations. I want to know where he is."

Once more the interpreter returned to the charge, and much conversation ensued.

"Well, what does he say now?"

"He say," replied the interpreter in his maddening drawl, "that one time ship come here, belong to Great Republic. Captain he come on shore give him one big bag of dollars and gold ring, and he say that Great Republic Captain he very like the Captain Sahib over there," pointing to me.

To detail the futilities that ensued would be to weary the reader to no purpose. To all questions as to Hassein's whereabouts Mahomed replied that Hassein was a brave man, that he loved the English very much, that he had gone on a journey, that he had enjoyed his dinner, that he slept sometimes in the heat of the day, &c., &c., all this filtering slowly through the interpreter. The sand danced and quivered in the awful heat, the glare from the sea was as blue fire, and I noticed the brown hands of my armed boat's crew slipping up and down their rifle-bands as the metal became too hot to handle. But I now became aware that heat and exasperation were

putting a keener edge on the Political's temper. With studied slowness he said to the interpreter: "Tell that doubly distilled monkey-faced abomination that if I don't know at once where Hassein is that there will be trouble."

Whether friend Mahomed thought that the game was up at last, I do not know, but the answer came crisp and short. "He say Hassein in the fort."

"Then send a man at once and tell him to come here."

Then there was more talk, the purport of which appeared to be that Hassein was a reckless daredevil, that he had twenty men armed with rifles with him in the fort all sworn to do or die, and so brave and so determined was he that none of the Oolad Boaziz dared to approach and order him to come out. We seemed to be at an *impasse*, but at last one man detached himself from his fellows and spoke. He explained that Hassein was terrible in his wrath, so terrible that he, the speaker, felt his heart fluttering like a little bird; this he illustrated in pantomime, but that he, he also was a brave man, and besides he was a man of intelligence and he knew that what the Captain Sahib said must be obeyed; consequently he would take upon himself the desperate venture of summoning Hassein to surrender.

In the light of subsequent events, what followed might be classed as comedy of a very high order. Advancing gingerly over the sand until he had detached himself some twenty yards from the waiting group our heart-fluttering friend stopped. Then he looked round with high resolve and daring purpose in his steadfast eye. A sort of sigh went up from the Oolad Boaziz as of admiration for the temerity of their countryman. The messenger surveyed us long and

gravely, then turning once more in the direction of the fort he advanced a few paces, took a deep breath and then leaning on his long Arab gun he called, "Hassein, a-a-a-h, a-a-h Hassein," with a dying cadence on the last syllable. Twice the cry palpitated through the scorching atmosphere and the silence. No sound came from the fort and in the tense, burning hush that followed the call the imagination pictured Hassein and the dauntless twenty lying finger on trigger, well concealed, and determined to die at their posts. The interpreter stirred uneasily and muttered "Hassein, he very brave and terrible." Once again pealed out "Hassein a-a-a-h, a-a-a-h Hassein," and in the silence that ensued you could have heard a pin drop.

"Beg your pardon, sir," said my coxswain, "but one of the men says that he seen an old chap with a white beard looking out of one of them there loopholes in the fort."

"Then I'm afraid the old gentleman is in for an uncomfortable time presently," I answered.

"Would you allow me to storm the fort, sir?" said the Captain of Native Infantry turning to the Political, his eyes dancing at the prospect.

"Excuse me," I said, "but if they have got twenty riflemen in that fort, you'd lose half your men before you got them out, and one common shell from the ship will settle their hash for good and all."

"The boat's crew, sir," said my paymaster, who had come ashore to see the fun, "say that if you'll let them do it, they'll put down their rifles and pull Hassein out with their hands."

"Tell the boat's crew to shut their silly mouths and when I want advice from them I'll ask for it," I answered. "I think," I went on to the Political, "that, if you will allow me, I will

now take a hand in the game; we can't sit on the beach all day, and if Hassein won't come out, he must be made to. Interpreter," I said, with just that ring of the quarter-deck in my voice that causes the disciplined man to skip, "tell Mahomed that I go back now to my ship; when I get there I hoist a red flag at the main and ten minutes after that, if Hassein and his following are not out of the fort, may the Lord have mercy on them, for I won't. Explain carefully that I shall fire at the fort and in a very few moments there won't be one stone left upon another. I have spoken. Boat's crew, in your boat. Will you kindly clear all these people out of danger of an exploding shell?" I asked of the Infantry Captain.

A few minutes later I stepped on the quarter-deck. "Sound general quarters and pass up filled common shell and percussion fuses," was the order I gave to the First Lieutenant. I just caught the look of beatitude in the Gunner's eye as he dived to his magazines at the sound of the bugle. But it was written that no desperate action was to be fought with Hassein. Ere the last note of the bugle had died away a signal came from the shore, "We have got the man."

"Very remarkable," I muttered, as stepping once more into my boat I was pulled ashore to the scene of the durbar.

"Where the devil was the fellow?" I asked the Political.

The latter who possessed a sense of humour was shaking with laughter. "You see that tent," he answered, pointing to a miserable erection where a few goat-skins were stretched upon some sticks.

"Yes," said I.

"Well, Hassein was in there all the time we have been sitting and blethering here on the beach."

The humour of the situation now

struck me. The tent, if such you can call it, was within five yards of where we had been sitting, and in it had been crouching all the time, the brave, the sanguinary, the implacable Hassein! Long and loud was the laughter at the conclusion of our desperate enterprise, and our hilarity was not diminished when on exploring the fort "the old chap with the long beard" who had been spotted by the lynx-eyed Blue-jacket turned out to be a venerable billy-goat who was the sole occupant of that majestic structure. Hassein, a miserable, under-sized little wretch of eighteen years of age was marched on board the steamer a prisoner; the troops re-embarked, and the expedition was over. The Political wiped his eyes.

"I've seen many a fine bit of acting both on and off the stage, old chap," said he, "but for the gifts of imagination and realistic insight I never saw the equal of Mahomed; and as for our heart-fluttering friend, there's not a comedy actor in London fit to black his shoes, if he had any."

Six weeks' imprisonment in a stone block-house at Paradise nearly made an end of Hassein; after which a paternal Government administered a lecture on the folly of intrigue, a lesson on the colours of national flags, and a warning that he wouldn't be let off quite so easily next time. Hassein departed to rule once more over the country of the Oolad Boaziz and to meditate upon the incomprehensible behaviour of European Governments. And the Expedition (with a large E) came back to Paradise and the Governor asked us to dinner and laughed till he cried. The club chaffed us unmercifully, and I wrote an official despatch, and such is the injustice of man I was not promoted on the spot. But on board-ship we had one consolation. In that climate

no fog comes rolling up out of the deep to turn your polished steel and brass and copper all the colours of the rainbow. No rain mars the artistic effort of the Blue-jackets' paint-brush, and so at the end of a few days and a little hard work, we were able to look at our ship with a certain amount of satisfaction. In the Navy come first discipline, then smartness, and then the beauty and cleanliness of the ship; and where discipline is strung exactly at the right pitch, where smartness in every drill and

exercise is a rushing, tearing, bewildering wonder to the uninitiated, *there* you will find the most loving care expended on every detail which will add to the appearance of the vessel. And so when the First Lieutenant modestly says, "I think you'll find her all right next time you go round, sir," you, knowing your man and knowing your crew, know also that you will see the most perfect thing in an imperfect world,—a well ordered British man-of-war.

ON THE WELSH MARCHES.

THERE are certain Scottish counties concerning which the irreverent Southron is apt to make almost a parade of his ignorance,—Clackmannan and Kirkcudbright for instance. Now I have a notion that little Radnor, despite its comparative propinquity, enjoys, though to a modified extent, something of the same distinction, or rather lack of it. Such oblivion is at any rate undeserved, for a more delightful county, taken as a whole, does not exist short of what one may describe as the really mountain districts of these islands. By those curious in statistics, moreover, Radnorshire should be accounted a treasure. For, though in area equal to Bedfordshire or Surrey, her whole population is very much less than that of the former's county town, or in other words a trifle of some twenty thousand souls. This would suggest almost more than the loneliness of Mayo or some Hebridean island; but as a matter of fact the mid Welsh shire appears to the casual traveller as populous and civilised as Devonshire, to which notable county indeed it bears no little resemblance.

These dry figures have, however, some human interest as illustrating the influence of towns and villages on census returns. Radnorshire has practically none of the first, and scarcely her full share of the second. There is a common notion that mediæval England, with its population of two or three millions, must have presented almost everywhere a wild and unpeopled look. Modern Radnorshire in this particular of souls to the square mile might fairly represent

an average slice of Chaucer's England, and it is instructive to note what a show of life, both animal and human, so minute a population, when wholly engaged on agriculture, makes upon so reasonably large an area.

There is an ancient bit of doggerel, familiar enough on the Welsh border and somewhat compromising to the former dignity of the little county, which runs thuswise.

Radnorsheer, poor Radnorsheer,
Never a park and never a deer,
Never a squire of five hundred a year,
But Richard Fowler of Abbey-cwm-hir.

I should hasten to remark that this uncivil reflection on the ancient armigers of Radnorshire is sometimes attributed to a Cromwellian rhymester,—no less a person indeed than the Protector's agent, whom he sent down to see what fines could be extorted from the already impoverished and always malignant Welsh gentry.¹ There are plenty of parks nowadays in Radnorshire, though not many perhaps that aspire to the dignity of antlered herds, and many snug country seats, and a general air of homeliness which, in spite of the great wedges of moorland thrust through the land, seems curiously to belie its eccentric sparseness of people.

Offa's dyke runs through the eastern edge of the county, and there is always a fine flavour of romance about its neighbourhood, whether in the north towards the Dee estuary,

¹ I think, however, that the Fowlers, wealthy traders, did not come in till James the Second.

or further south where it wanders over hill and dale towards the Severn Sea. The Scottish border has hitherto almost monopolised that class of literature which deals in popular fashion with border conflict. The hundred and fifty or so ruined castles of the Welsh Marches may some day perhaps be galvanised into life and made to tell their stirring tale of racial strife to a public outside the societies of antiquaries. The castles of North Wales are magnificent, but they are comparatively few in number, and the great masterpieces among them were built by the first Edward to signalise and secure his conquest. Those of South Wales, on the other hand, were themselves the engines of its gradual subduction, are far more numerous, and have seen for the most part much wilder work. But the intelligent travelling public does not patronise South Wales, greatly to its own loss. When it does, there will surely be some curiosity concerning these eloquent and splendid piles, these "wrecks of forgotten wars," and the stirring tale of the slow conquest by the Norman barons of Central and South Wales may dawn in men's minds as a strangely overlooked chapter of British history.

Now on the precise line that separates Radnor from Hereford there are the scant remains of a Norman fortress. Architecturally it is nothing, a mere block or two of rent and rugged masonry, softened here and there by thick festoons of ivy. Everything else has gone long ago to mend roads or build cow-sheds. It is the site that holds our fancy with its commanding outlook and its geographical appropriateness. How it would have rejoiced the heart of Scott, whom one need hardly remind the reader fell at once under the spell of the Marcher Castle in his only visit to Wales.

For lo! the martial vision fails,
The glimmering spears are seen no
more;
The shouts of war die on the gales,
Or sink in Severn's lonely roar.

Whatever the shortcomings of *THE BETROTHED*, it has an undying interest if only on this account. But there was here none of the splendour of Powis Castle, which would seem to have been in Scott's mind when he wrote his Welsh romance. No throngs of gaily dressed, pleasure-seeking knights and dames, either Welsh or English, crossed the drawbridge of this fierce old stronghold among the clouds. It was given up wholly to the grim business of war. Set on the crown of a great prehistoric tumulus, which itself fills the head of a narrow glen, and some thousand feet or more above the sea, this ghost of a fortress, which once breathed defiance to the west and secured protection for the east, affords a rare perch on a warm spring day for the dreamer of dreams. Idle and purposeless no doubt they will be, but at least as profitable as attempts to catch trout in the Arrow, trickling down yonder with thin streams and glinting in the glare of a midday sun and an azure sky. The ruin itself is in Herefordshire, but a noisy rivulet in the dingle below, over which you could pitch a stone, marks the line between England and Wales. To the right and left lofty ridges, chequered in some places to their summits with enclosures, in others baring their heads shaggy with gorse and heather to the wind, push out like huge buttresses into the glowing rosy-tinted low grounds of Hereford. Between them joyous streams, born somewhere away in the wilds of Radnor, go hurrying down to meet the Wye. Behind us the ground rises quickly and steeply to a cold borderland, from whose brow you may overlook no insignificant portion

of South Wales. Yonder, for instance, within a dozen miles, is the long dark rolling ridge of the Black Mountains of Brecon. In the deep hollow on the hither side of them, the Wye is urging its restless streams, now swishing under red banks, now clamorous over wide shingly shallows. Hay is down there, and no great way from us, though tucked out of sight by its commanding hills; an old and straggling Welsh townlet, with its great castle still dominating the narrow tortuous streets in "English" and "Welsh," scene of a hundred bloody struggles, the Berwick of the Southern Marches. Close by too, on the river bank, are the fragments of Clifford Castle, whence came "that rose of the world, that rare and peerless piece," Fair Rosomond. Westward on the verge of sight rise the pointed summits of the Brecon beacons, whose somewhat inadequate English name makes one prone to overlook their rank, and to forget that it is on a par with that of Helvellyn and Cader Idris. Below us spread the fruitful fields and pleasant woodlands of nearer Radnor, bounded from north to south by the green walls and the rolling heath-clad summits of the forest of that name.

Up here on this dividing ridge one seems to be on the very roof of the world,—curlews and plover, rending the air with their wild and melancholy cries, its only tenants. Modern progress, however, or to speak more correctly, the progress which the conditions of thirty years ago encouraged, is with us even thus high. The heather has been banished, and thin pale-complexioned grasses make a doubtful fight against wandering gorse-brakes and encroaching rush-beds. Bank fences, laboriously made in days when the landowner's and the farmer's hopes ran high, now show sad breaches beaten out by the feet of hungry and

agile stock. Loose rusty wires hum in the wind upon their tops, where last year's beech-leaves still rustle on the struggling wind-beaten plantings. There is an air of despondency and regret, a look of failure and misdirected energy about this half-tamed moorland. The very larches that have survived the tempest look in their woe-begone nakedness as if they were tired of a life that had no respite from every blast that blew.

But to drop down again to the ruin on the English slope of the ridge: there is no object in dwelling either on the traces of its moat and outer works, of its crumbled towers and curtains, nor yet on its owners, of which there is a long and distinguished list. It will do, however, as well as any, and better than most places to gossip for a page or two on the strange conditions that once obtained in all this country lying to the south and west of us. The brook that sings in the dingle beneath is after all but a modern boundary fixed by the surveyors of Henry the Eighth when he turned that chaotic region known as the Marches of Wales into royal counties and closed its long story of tyranny and disorder.

No excuse is needed, I am sure, for reminding a great many readers that the Marches of Wales, though originally what the name implied, soon ceased to mean the border of the two countries, but all that part rather of Wales which was conquered by Norman adventurers or Norman kings from the native princes. Henry the Eighth is a luminous character. Every one is familiar with his matrimonial irregularities, while his ecclesiastical policy is a bone of contention to thousands who read very little history bearing on other subjects. Even his caperings on the Field of the Cloth of Gold linger in the mind as a sort of legacy of the nursery period. But

who remembers that this bluff Bluebeard actually brought about the genuine union of England and Wales to the enormous benefit and great satisfaction of both countries? Probably only a Tudor could have done it, so powerful were the private interests in the old order. For it was he who extinguished two or three score independent potentates, and who changed Wales from a turbulent ill-governed appanage into an integral and peaceful part of England. It was Henry, too, who in the course of this really great achievement, created the modern counties of Montgomery, Denbigh, Radnor, Monmouth, Brecon, Glamorgan, and Pembroke, and brought them into line with those created two hundred and fifty years earlier by Edward the First.

Some special claim, moreover, dating from another period, has this very ground we are standing on. For in the only approach to anything like a real conquest of Wales by the Saxons, namely that of Harold, it was retained by that distinguished soldier and attached to the earldom of Hereford. He also planted an industrial colony of Saxons on the Radnor side of Offa's dyke; the only instance, I believe, with one doubtful exception, of such a proceeding prior to the Norman Conquest, which temporarily obliterated all trace of the Saxon in Wales and changed him from an object of dread or rivalry to one of something like contempt.

No ordinary mortal could be expected to burden his mind with the struggle of Celt and Saxon on the Welsh border. It was continuous and fierce, and after four centuries left off very much where it began. The pressure was perhaps just beginning to bear somewhat hardly upon the Welsh, when the collapse of the Saxon power brought such profound

relief that their three kingdoms fell to fighting one another with a gaiety stimulated by the extinction of the common foe.

But if this period may fairly be left to the specialist, the attitude of the Norman towards Wales, when he had finished with England, does really seem to me to be something more than an obscure backwater of British history. Wales was not barbarous like the Highlands of Scotland, or semi-barbarous like Ireland. It was an old civilisation, as things then went in Western Europe, and numerically a more important slice of Britain than now. Moreover its people were passionately warlike. Its conquest hardly seems to have been part of William's scheme. When he found himself confronted by another race, speaking a strange tongue and fighting under conditions of which he had no experience, he would almost appear to have given the business up. He is always said to have referred to the Welsh on his deathbed as "a people with whom I have held perilous conflicts." It was reserved for Rufus to commence operations some twenty to thirty years later, and this he did, after some personal failure, by proxy and in somewhat unheroic fashion. In brief, he gave a licence to those of his needier or more adventurous barons to carve out for themselves such territories as they could win and hold by the sword from either of the three kingdoms of Wales. Bernard de Newmarch was one of the first of these noble adventurers, and after much bloodshed managed to possess himself of Brycheiniog, a fief of South Wales now roughly represented by the county of Brecon. Newmarch parcelled it out among his followers, and castles rose upon its hill-tops and beside its fords. Having married, as many of his type did, a Welsh lady of royal lineage, he reserved for his own

enjoyment the very tract we are now standing on, and probably built the castle.

But Glamorgan was the most notable of these annexations, since it was not a case of mere unprovoked aggression, but to a certain extent invited by the Welsh themselves. For in the year 1090 or thereabouts, the sub-prince of Glamorgan (or Morganwg as it was then called) had a disagreement with his suzerain Rhys ap Tudor, ruler of South Wales. Passing over details which are complex and disputed, the Normans were summoned in a weak moment by the intractable princeling to his assistance, and arrived by sea in the shape of thirteen knights with a strong force at their back. The leader of the expedition was a certain Fitzhamon, who, with his friends, was to be paid for his services in cash or its equivalent. Their assistance was effectual, so far as the original quarrel was concerned; but the richness of the country proved altogether too great a temptation for their predatory instincts, and the drama of Vortigern and his Saxon allies was reacted in the vale of Glamorgan. Aided somewhat by local faction Fitzhamon and his twelve knights now turned on their Welsh allies, and succeeded in wresting from them the better part of their territory. Fitzhamon then, under conditions of knight fealty and service, divided the province among his followers, who proceeded forthwith to erect one or more strong castles upon their several domains. Their chief himself held from the King, became Earl of Gloucester, and from his strong castle at Cardiff ruled his new territory, not as his contemporaries ruled their English earldoms, by proscribed laws, but as a monarch, independent and absolute. Monthly courts were held at Cardiff, where appeals were heard against his subor-

dinate barons who exercised jurisdiction each in his own lordship. This sounds simple in the narration, but it proceeded amid the almost continuous clash of arms, and the lordships were only maintained by the power of impregnable castles and bands of armed mercenaries. In the end comparative peace was only obtained by granting the Welsh tenantry their own laws and their own law-courts. Some of the native nobles too held sub-fiefs from Marcher over-lords; and in later generations several of them became through marriage or otherwise Lords-Marchers themselves, returning as it were through Norman channels to their old positions, though holding them of the King of England instead of their own prince.

A pretty tale is told of one of these same Fitzhamon knights, Paine Turberville, whose descendants to this day keep the ancient name alive in Glamorganshire. Turberville seems to have been left out in the partition, and with much justice made complaint of his treatment to Fitzhamon. The latter replied curtly, "Here are arms and men; go, take what you can." Turberville then selected for his operations the lordship of Coity, the ruins of whose castle still survive near Bridgend. It belonged to a Welshman, Morgan ap Meurig, who being summoned to surrender came out of the gates to every one's surprise leading his daughter by his left hand and grasping his sword with his right. Then passing through the army he came to Turberville and informed him that if, like an honest man, he would take his daughter in marriage, he should inherit his castle and manor; but otherwise, rather than spill the blood of so many men, they two would decide the ownership by single combat. Turberville chose the lady and the gentler method, after which he dismissed his Anglo-Norman troops

and engaging a force of two thousand Welshman became the champion of native rights in that stormy corner of the world.

The story of Glamorgan, on a lesser scale and in more fragmentary fashion, became the story of more than half Wales. After nearly two centuries of constant fighting a moiety of North Wales and portions of Cardigan and Carmarthen were all that was left to the native princes. The rest of the country was a mosaic of palatinates, chief of which were the great earldom of Glamorgan, second to none in the kingdom, and the Anglo-Flemish lordship of Pembroke.¹ In recalling old Wales the present counties must be forgotten; they did not, as such, exist. But it must be remembered that Cheshire too was a palatinate, having been designedly created one by William the Conqueror as a protection against the Welsh. Its turbulence was of course notorious. The pride its people took in their independence was insufferable to other Englishmen: "These common people," says one sore-headed chronicler in the time of Richard the Second, "think themselves better than the great lords of other countries." After all, the anomaly of this strange state of things does not lie in its existence while England itself was still making, but that it should have survived in Wales so late as the second Tudor. The fact is that Edward the First, in his conquest and settlement of what the native princes still ruled of their country, dared not venture to disturb the hornets' nest that lay outside those narrow limits, or touch the sword-won rights of this horde of petty kings who in foreign affairs were on

his side. Thus, when he created the northern counties of Carnarvon, Anglesey, Merioneth, and Flint with Cardigan and Carmarthen, and put them under county government, the larger part of what is now called the Principality was left to the tender mercies, the quenchless jealousies, the quarrels and tyrannies of the Marcher barons. The Principality, which became the heritage actually, not as now titularly, of the eldest sons of the Kings of England, was the six counties only. The Prince of Wales's rule had no more concern with Montgomery or Brecon than it had with Durham. The March of Wales had long ceased to mean the border. It had become no small slice of Britain, and more powerful even than its size implied from the independence of its baronage. The Greys, the Despensers, the Clares, the Nevilles, the de Bohuns, the Beauchamps and last, though anything but least, the mighty Mortimers, are a few of the potent names that recall the power of the country west of the Severn in the days of old. Edward the Fourth tried to curb its abuses by instituting a Court of Appeal at Ludlow for the Welsh Marches. Henry the Seventh, by whose time the system was becoming intolerable, had no difficulty in further strengthening this court. It remained for his son, however, to take the bull by the horns and, with but slight opposition from the privileged class, to reduce them to the condition of ordinary landowners, to the immense relief of the gentry and commons whose petitions are really precious in the all too scanty evidence we have of social life in ancient Wales.

In spite of all this it will be well to remember that there can be but a trifling strain of Saxon blood in any part of Wales save southern Pembroke, which is not Welsh at all.

¹ The word *palatinate* is used for convenience; in a strictly legal sense it is, I believe, incorrect. There were in all nearly one hundred and fifty of these petty States.

Its conquerors were Norman barons, and though Saxons formed beyond a doubt an element of their immediate following, they were mostly groups of soldiers who built up small towns under the shadow of the greater castles, did not seriously mix with the hostile population round them, and indeed almost disappeared in the course of generations, giving place to Welshmen.

The long wars with France occupied the swords of thousands of Welshmen, turned their attention from domestic wretchedness, and somewhat softened their hatred of the Conqueror. Every Marcher-lordship had its own laws and customs, its judges, chancellor, officers, and sometimes its own mint, with sole appeal to a capricious and absolute chieftain. Their jealousies and feuds were bitter and abiding. To shelter each other's felons was almost a point of honour. The vassals of one lordship had to keep the road as they passed through a neighbouring territory. In a bounded forest a man found ten paces from the track was liable to the loss of all portable property, and for the second offence of a limb. The roaming of cattle across this lace-work of boundaries was the cause, as may be readily imagined, of incessant blood-feuds. The Marches had not the advantages of the royal counties which, after Edward the First's conquest, though unrepresented in Parliament, were governed as a crown-colony,—to use a sufficiently accurate modern parallel—the heir to the English throne being by custom appointed governor. Several of the Marcher barons had the right of sitting in Parliament, and they also claimed the privilege of supporting the canopy at coronations with silver spears. To increase the confusion in Mid and South Wales many of the Marcher lordships had come, as

Cheshire eventually did, into the possession of the Crown as private fiefs, and were governed by bailiffs as agents for the King. Monmouthshire, or to speak generally, the Gwent of former days, was parcelled into lordships, while considerable tracts of modern Shropshire and Herefordshire lay then within the Marches and outside the King's writ.

All over the region, here spread like a map beneath us, east and west as far as the sight can range, the great name of Mortimer must loom large in any vision that tries to recall the feudal ages and rebuild its mouldering castles. Deep into the broken surface of Radnor and far into Hereford spread the Mortimer tenantry in the days of Glendower. Innumerable castles held their knights and captains. Many thousand tenants, Saxon and Celt, ploughed their red lands on the lower Wye or grazed their green pastures on the uplands of Radnor. It was from here that one of the last of the long line, the luckless Edmund, with every man in the country he could raise, went out to fight Glendower and to meet his curious fate. The place of their meeting is in fact not much over a dozen miles from this very castle. It was a memorable encounter, and made the second of June, 1402, a day to be long remembered upon the Hereford marches. Mortimer's Radnor levies were, it is said, half-hearted or worse, and eleven hundred knights, squires, and churls of Hereford bit the dust upon the Hill of Pilleth. Mortimer was captured, won over to the cause of his conqueror, and soon after wedded to his daughter, dying six years later (of starvation so says tradition) within the walls of beleaguered Harlech.

There is little doubt but that a request for information upon the battle of Pilleth would carry dis-

may into any history-class; but the oblivion which has closed over the memory of this savage fight is no measure of the stir it made in its day. Its consequences, which have no concern with us now, were considerable, and in no battle probably of that age, save Shrewsbury, did so many Englishmen fall on their own soil.

After this I must, for modesty's sake, hasten to say that special circumstances had made me familiar with all that there is to be known about this bloody rout and slaughter, which is not indeed very much. For myself the site of a battle of any importance has, I confess, an immense attraction, wholly one of imagination or sentiment or whatever may be the exact note of those strange chords that vibrate so curiously and fitfully within us. For years I had cherished a vague hope of some day hunting out the field of Pilleth, that Majuba of Henry the Fourth, which Shakespeare at any rate had not forgotten. It seemed a fine opportunity when staying, not a great while ago, within a stone's throw of this old Mortimer castle and surrounded, no doubt, by the descendants of the very men who marched with Sir Edmund and fell so thickly round him. I consulted my host. He had never heard of Pilleth, though he had taken honours in history at Oxford; but he was anxious to further, and also to assist at any reasonable adventure, and though Pilleth might sound vague, it meant a pleasant journey at a theoretically pleasant time of year through an ever-charming country.

We took down Shakespeare from the shelf, and opened it at that scene in *HENRY THE FOURTH* where the King, indulging in his favourite dream of a crusade, is rudely brought back to stern facts by the entry of Westmoreland announcing,—

A post from Wales laden with heavy
news;
Whose worst was, that the noble
Mortimer,
Leading the men of Herefordshire to
fight
Against the irregular and wild Glen-
dower,
Was by the rude hands of that Welsh-
man taken,
A thousand of his people butchered.

The next thing was the ordnance map, where Pilleth was marked sure enough, though in small characters, and appeared to be some fourteen miles off.

It was a bright May noon when we descended the bank, as everything short of a mountain is called on the Welsh border, and dropped down several hundred feet into Radnorshire. The method of our progress, I need hardly say, was the inevitable bicycle, though it may be worth while noting that Wales seems to be the only country where you may still see bodies of farmers travelling on horseback. Our road for a time led us through deep valleys whose hill-born streams raced by our side or rippled over meadows where sturdy red and white Herefords crunched greedily at the still chary pasture. We climbed over the feet of ridges that swept far upwards, soft carpets of green turf and ferns and scattered thickets of birch or thorn whence sounded the cuckoo's tireless song. We passed through small hamlets, rich in the black and white architecture of the Welsh border and dominated by churches wearing a look of dignified authority very far removed from the harassed and chapel-smothered aspect common to those of wilder Wales. There were clog-makers at work with their white tents pitched among the alders and stacks of wooden shoes destined for shipment to northern towns. A characteristic old border industry this, and I thought of George

Borrow and his clog-making friends in the vale of the Ceiniog. We stopped for a moment to look inside the stately and ancient church of old Radnor, nearly all indeed that remains of one of those Welsh townlets that Leland curtly dismisses, as he passes them, with "deflor'd by Glindor." Perched in striking fashion upon an outstanding ledge on the hillside the battlemented church overlooks a stretch of fruitful and well-wooded low ground, bounded by the long rolling ridges of Radnor forest, suggesting in every particular of height, colour, and contour a curious parallel to Dartmoor. Yonder too, where the shadow lay thick on a gorge in the green wall of moorland, we could note signs of New Radnor slumbering in remote obscurity. A much bigger town was this one than the other, though long shrivelled to a village. It too was "deflor'd by Glindor," and to some purpose. On a height above we could just make out the site of a once famous castle, on whose ramparts the Welsh national hero hanged the whole garrison as an encouragement to the other castles who defied him.

Welsh enough in name and stock are the people on the road, whether horse or foot, but not a glimmer of the ancient tongue remains in these parts. The intonation of course is there, and a soft western voice with a slight touch of Saxon burr, perhaps upon the whole the most pleasing vernacular of English-speaking Britain. Some maintain that the people themselves are the most pleasant of all rural stocks to have to do with.

Now Pilleth was marked upon our map with a cross (denoting a church), and as we dropped down a big bank into the valley of that famous trout and grayling stream, the Lugg, the scent was beginning to grow hot. As we crossed the Lugg the glory of

the day had gone, and clouds were banking up from the west. We knew by the map that the object of our journey must be within a couple of miles, and looking up the narrow valley there, sure enough, at the very spot it ought to be, a bold and lofty hill reared its head upon the northern bank of the stream. I knew by instinct this was the Bryn Glâs, the green hill of the old chroniclers down which the Welsh army rushed on Mortimer's Englishmen. A flash of forked lightning at this moment split the dark curtain of sky behind it, and an ominous peal of thunder gave us much cause of congratulation that we were entering a small village, and still more that the signboard of a homely tavern hung just in front of us. While the rain was falling heavily, mine host informed us that Pilleth consisted of a ruined church and a farmhouse some two miles up the valley. A battle? "Yes, sure, there's the tracks of battles all the way up the river." But he had never heard of Glendower, degenerate Welshman that he was, and the signs of strife he alluded to were camps and tumuli of a period compared to which that of Edmund Mortimer was as yesterday.

When the storm was over we pressed on up the valley, and the hill of battle, about which I felt no doubt, soon confronted us; a green sweep to its summit with a solitary spinney, set somewhat inconsequently, we thought, on its face. A large farm-house, evidently once a manor, and a ruinous church lay at its foot. A shepherd was counting a flock of Shropshire ewes and lambs through a gate into the road, and the task completed, he informed us that this was certainly Pilleth; but he had never heard of any battle there. The hill was commonly called Pilleth Hill, though he believed it might once

have been called Bryn Glâs "or somethen." No sentence, I may remark, is ever quite fully rounded in the ears of the rustic borderer without this qualifying termination.

Addressing ourselves to the farmhouse as the most likely source of information, we pulled at the door-bell till we were tired of its mocking echoes. We then in despair sought the back premises, where a dairy-woman was settling down to the task of milking a half score of well-furnished cows. The master, she told us, had gone to Knighton, and it was with slight expectation of any answering glimmer of light that I sounded this stalwart Phyllis on the subject of our quest. She was a long way in advance of both the publican and the shepherd. Yes, sure, there had been a great battle on that hill behind the house in Glendower's time, she had heard; but she apologised for burdening her memory with such useless rubbish by a reference to her husband as "a great hand at these things." We pricked up our ears at once and enquired the whereabouts of this village antiquary. He was ploughing in a field, some half a mile off, she said, and giving us the line we eventually, after some very sticky cross-country work, ran into him ridging up turnip-land. Our rustic was properly astonished at being thus sought out in the seclusion of his turnip-field by two strangers, and when the object of our visit was disclosed he was still more so. It was apparently unique in his experience of Pilleth, which he informed us was coeval with his life. His knowledge proved rather practical than historical, and more to the point than we could have ventured to hope. The hill of Pilleth, or Bryn Glâs, hung right above us, and he drew our attention to the spinney on its face. Some twenty to thirty years ago, it

seems, the tenant broke up the pasture, and on the spot now marked by the plantation his ploughs drove into quantities of human bones, evidently the burying-place of a battle not too remote. Upon this the plot of ground, perhaps half an acre in extent, was withdrawn from cultivation and by a singularly happy inspiration, of the landlord's presumably, planted with the clump of trees which so strikingly marks the resting-place of part at any rate of the eleven hundred men of Hereford, whose *post-mortem* ill treatment cast such a slur upon the ladies of Radnor. All accounts say that the English were caught in a gorge at the foot of the hill, and thus cramped in their powers of either fighting or running away. The valley of the Lugg on the south side seems a thought too wide for such a state of affairs. There is a dingle, however, upon the other that might well have proved a death-trap to a panic-stricken army.

Our ploughman attributed his antiquarian tastes to the schoolmaster of the village we had lunched at. So on returning, we at once sought out this gentleman, whom we found released from his labours and tying up roses in a delightfully old-fashioned garden, before a house in thorough keeping with it. He was, I think, originally from Cardiganshire, that prolific nursery of parsons and teachers, and was as well versed in local lore as we could have desired, and substantially confirmed the ploughman's tale. We encountered too at his hands a hospitality that would positively take no denial, and around the grateful and unexpected teapot discussed not only the mishap of the noble Mortimer but many other matters of interest in which this little known but delightful country abounds.

A. G. BRADLEY.

THE STAMPEDE OF THE BLACK RANGE CATTLE

ACROSS the Queensland border-line the big mobs of cattle come down year by year to New South Wales for sale. Far away up in the centre and north of Queensland are the runs where these cattle are bred, runs comprising hundreds of square miles of unfenced untravelled Bush where thousands of half-wild beasts roam at large, each mob keeping fairly well to its own part of the runs and having its own centre, or camp, to which they are always driven when mustered for any purpose. The stations are worked by a few white men with the assistance of the smartest natives of the district, and month in and month out there is a constant branding of calves. These stations are so far from the market that it would be useless to send down fat cattle from them for sale, as the beasts would lose all their condition on the road; they are therefore sent in mobs of four or five hundred at a time in what is called store condition, driven down to the settled districts and sold there in lots to the smaller land-holders who fatten them up for the market. The cattle are not taken down by the station-hands but by drovers who know their business thoroughly; and indeed to manage some hundreds of fierce-eyed, vindictive Queensland cattle, wild as hawks and fast as racehorses, on a journey lasting perhaps six months, is no light undertaking. The drovers must know the ways of cattle as they know the ways of their own brothers: they must know the laws of the Overland which are few but effective,—so many miles to be travelled, so much notice to be given, so much spread

allowed the mob when travelling; and they have to be untiring in their vigilance, because for every beast that dies or is lost on the road so much is deducted from their pay.

In the day-time the cattle travel quietly enough, with one drover riding on ahead to steady their pace and make them spread out to graze, while another rides on each flank of the mob and a couple more bring up the rear. But at night the cattle, timid and suspicious by nature, are uneasy and restless; a constant watch has to be kept over them lest they should rush off their camp and get lost in the pathless Bush. Even after they have been weeks on the road any strange sound or sight will send them off their camp in a panic. Sometimes they seem to see ghosts: they will not rest on their camp, though there is apparently nothing to disturb them; then the drovers must ride round them all night calling to them and trying to steady their nerves. An Australian poet, Barcroft Boake, has written it:

Only the hand of night can free them,
That's when the dead men fly;
Only the frightened cattle see them,
See the dead men go by.
Cloven hoofs beating out one measure,
Bidding the drovers know no leisure,
That's when the dead men take their
pleasure,
That's when the dead men fly.

Some camps are noted above others for their ghostly influences, and the drovers would never use them only that they cannot get water anywhere else. This will explain how it was that the Black Range Cattle, five

hundred strong, in charge of such an experienced drover as Red Mick Conroy, found themselves drawing into camp at the Dead Man's Water-hole which, as every drover knows, is haunted, and on which cattle can no more lie down and rest than they could on a battle-field.

Red Mick was a little grizzled old man who had been droving for half a lifetime. Many and many a mob of the fierce-eyed, pike-horned Black Range cattle he had safely convoyed down to civilisation, and many and many a long weary night-watch he had spent with them. Mark him now as he rides slowly across the sunlit plain on his old white horse, his keen grey eyes peering out, as he notes each well known sign in the camp. He sits close down on his rough weather-beaten old saddle, while his legs fit round the sides of his horse as if he had been modelled on the animal: a battered old cabbage-tree hat is on his head; he is dressed in moleskin trousers and shirt, for his coat is strapped across the front of his saddle; and in his right hand he carries the short-handled, long-thonged stock-whip with which he can cut through the hair and hide of a bullock. His old horse picks his way through the mud to the edge of the water-hole, and plunging his head in over the nostrils drinks with much noise and gasping. Behind him come the cattle, gaunt, upstanding, long-horned beasts "spear-horned and curly, red, spotted and starred." They are spread about over the plain but, as they scent the water, they draw together and stare fiercely at the drover and his horse, waiting till he has finished before they will go up to drink; they have not been long enough on the road yet to drink alongside a human being. At the back of the mob are two more slouching figures on horse-back sitting silent and motionless

waiting for the cattle to draw in to water. One is young Red Mick Conroy, the old man's son, a slight wiry youth of about eighteen, already one of the finest rough-riders and best hands with cattle in all Australia; his mate is a quiet, mild-eyed, black-bearded bushman known as Silent Jim, of whom it is recorded that one of the longest speeches he ever made was when he said "not guilty" in answer to a charge of cattle-stealing at Dubbo Circuit Court. Behind them again comes a cart with a white tilt, jolting along over the cattle-trodden plain. It is drawn by one bleary-eyed old horse, and in it sits a black figure, apparently a man for it is dressed in moleskin trousers and shirt, wears a slouch hat on its head, and is smoking a pipe; but it is really Maggie, a black girl who, with her husband Derrybong, has been persuaded to leave the delights of their native Black Range station and come on this journey with the cattle, allured by the prospect of "plenty feller tobaccer, plenty feller rum, plenty tucker all the time." Behind the cart lags a pack-horse, strolling along at his ease picking at the grass, and behind him comes a long wiry black man with bare feet and hair blowing in the wind, riding a snorting terrified colt. The black fellow's face is expanded in a broad grin as his body sways and bends to each bound of the horse; the reason of the animal's excitement is that the rider is carrying a large mud-turtle which he has just caught, and as he holds it by the head, its heavy shell and body sway about wildly at the end of its long neck while its feet paw the air feebly; a state of things that makes the colt half frantic with terror.

"What yer got, Derrybong?" drawls young Mick in the slow nasal twang of the Monaro mountaineer. "Not

goin' to eat *him* are yer?" he says, as the black fellow throws the turtle down beside the halted cart and carefully descends from the snorting and suspicious colt. The turtle immediately tucks in all his members under his shell, fully convinced that he is thereby making all snug for the night: old black Maggie descends from the cart and unharnesses the blear-eyed horse; Derrybong makes a fire; the three drovers halt the cattle under a big clump of trees with an open space all round, and sit motionless on their horses waiting for the beasts to settle down. The sun has sunk, leaving a red blaze of glory in the west; a cool breeze springs up, and over the great stretch of plain there rises a mingled perfume of crushed grasses, scented trees, and the breath of cattle; and then, suddenly, the velvety darkness closes down, the tilt of the cart begins to show ghostly white, the water of the Dead Man's Lagoon to glimmer with stars, and the subdued murmur of the restless cattle is the only sound that breaks the silence.

It is a glorious night; the velvet of the sky is spangled with stars, and the silence is wonderful. Yet the cattle will not settle; they stir about restlessly, now and again breaking out into low moanings like creatures in pain. The three drovers ride round them keeping them within the limits of their camp, but they seem to scent trouble in the air. As they ride to and fro young Mick and his father meet and separate again, and at intervals they exchange a few words of conversation.

"Ain't this where the Pikes was murdered?" says young Mick.

"Yes," says the old man uneasily, his Irish breeding making itself felt. "There's the fince that was round their yarrd. And a felly come along and he driv' up in a cart widout a horse,—at least there was never no

tracks of a horse; and he cut all their troats with a shear-blade and was took and hanged; and they do say the Pikes' ghosts walks here of a night; but we had to camp here, there's no other water wid'in fifteen mile."

This speech was delivered bit by bit as father and son met and separated again, as they did sentry-go round the mob.

"Do you believe all that rot?" said the son scornfully, he being a true Australian absolutely devoid of superstition. The old man answered nothing, but when the cattle had settled a little he rode over to the fire and sat down to get something to eat, leaving the other two to watch the mob. He let his horse graze about with the bridle trailing, while he applied himself to the cold beef, damper, and black tea, which Maggie had prepared. He was just pouring himself out a pannikin of scalding tea from the big billy-can when he suddenly caught sight of a brown snake-like head with two evil little eyes not half a foot from his leg. He gave a yell like a Comanche Indian, dropped the billy-can, spilling the scalding tea on his leg, and seizing the tomahawk with which Maggie had been cutting firewood he made a terrific blow at what he thought was a snake; but the stroke descended on our unfortunate friend the turtle, crushing his armour in like an egg-shell, and though nothing,—not even cutting his head off—will kill a turtle right out, at any rate this one was so badly damaged that he became demoralised, walked into the fire and fizzled there, working his feet convulsively and kicking up the ashes like a volcano while old Mick sprang up into the cart in an ecstasy of terror. The two black fellows laughed heartily, for like all their kind they dearly loved a joke, and when they

could speak for laughing they said : "Baal tnake,—that fellow durtle ! (it isn't a snake, it's a turtle)."

The old man came down from his perch quite crestfallen, and with his nerves very much shaken. "What der yez want to bring him here for ?" he said roughly, as he kicked the ruins of the turtle far into the darkness. "Go and get some more water, Maggie ; the tea's all spilt." But Maggie only grunted and wriggled about uneasily ; the black folk are all more or less afraid of the "debbil debbil" after dark, and the unrest of the cattle had impressed her with the idea that the place was uncanny.

"Well, you go, Derrybong," said the old man. "You aren't such a fool as Maggie to be afraid of the devil. Take my horse."

Derrybong somewhat unwillingly took the can, climbed on to the patient old horse, and jogged him off towards the water, a couple of hundred yards or so distant. In the lagoon a few frogs croaked plaintively, while away under the trees the cattle still moaned and trampled, goring each other, and keeping up a perpetual eddy of motion. All around for miles and miles,—to the end of the world as it seemed—there brooded the deep mysterious silence of the Australian plain.

Suddenly, from far across the plain, in the direction where the white streak of road disappeared in the night, there came the faint but clear sound of a bell ; *cling-clang* it came, a sweet silver sound, that floated musically through the night. For three or four seconds no living thing moved on the camp ; men, cattle, and horses held their breath ; then again it came, clearer and stronger and much closer, *cling-clang, cling-clang*. Then a hoarse inarticulate blare, *booo-ah ! booo-ah !* roared across the silence of the night, and far away,

where the road turned into the trees, there showed a flaming eye of fire, an eye that swept down on the camp at terrific speed and with noiseless movement ; and again there burst out the *cling-clang, booo-ah !*

Then things began to happen. From the lagoon at full gallop came the black man, Derrybong, with his face a dull grey from fear, and the eyes of the old horse starting out of his head ; the horse instinctively stopped dead beside the cart for one second, just long enough for Derrybong to point a rigid arm up the road and gasp out in inarticulate terror, "Hooooh ! what name ! what name !" Then Maggie, seeing no other means of escape, made one spring up behind her husband, clasped him round the waist, and the old horse with his double burden shot away into the darkness. Right in front of him was the ruined fence that had once been the house-yard of the murdered Pikes ; neither the horse nor his two riders had ever negotiated a fence in their lives ; but the three of them cleared this with hardly a rap and disappeared into the night. As they dashed at the fence the mysterious visitor came sweeping down on to the camp. *Cling-clang, cling cling cling ! booo-ah ! boooo-ah ! booo - ah !* The old man, after one look, sprang up into the cart with a leap that would have done credit to a kangaroo, and he, staring with fixed and glassy eyes over the dashboard, is the only witness as to what followed. According to him, he saw a figure with no face, but with a pair of big goggle eyes and a black shapeless mask where his face should have been, riding in a chariot of fire, drawn by no horses but moving with incredible swiftness, and puffing out jets of smoke, while the figure pulled and hauled at the front of the vehicle as though trying to control the fiends that were running

away with him. The effect of this apparition on the cattle was instantaneous. At the first faint sound they were all on their feet,—for it is a curious thing about cattle that at one second they may be, half of them, walking about, and the other half lying down, with their heads pointing different ways, yet in one instant, as if at a given signal, they will all be on their feet and all going in the same direction. So it was in this case. The first *cling-cling* seemed to hold them spell-bound, but at the second ring and at the awful yell which accompanied it, the whole mob made one grand stampede, sweeping through the trees like an avalanche, smashing stumps and saplings, breaking their own ribs and legs and horns, leaving a wake of crippled beasts and smashed timber behind them, getting wilder and more frantic as they went. Right in the front of them, sick with fear, with his head buried in his horse's neck raced young Red Mick,—the man who didn't believe in ghosts! Away across the plain by himself spurring his horse like a madman sped Silent Jim, silent no longer but making the plain echo with his yells. In less than ten seconds the whole thing was over,—men and cattle were out of sight and out of hearing, except for a dull roar where the beasts crashed through the scrub. The ghostly visitor had swept on at incredible speed, keeping to the main road and his *cling-cling* dying away in the distance; the old man, cowering in the cart, was the only living thing left on Dead Man's Camp, and he only stayed there because he had no horse to ride, and was too paralysed with fear to run.

All night long he sat and shivered in the cart; at dawn a wan figure on a terrified horse came circling about the horizon till the old man gathered

courage with the daylight, and waved it up. It was young Mick, and later on Silent Jim also cast up, more silent than ever; neither of the blacks folk, nor their horse, was ever seen again. It is supposed that they either rode into a gully in the night and were killed, or else they never stopped going till they got right away out of civilisation altogether. Only about half the cattle were ever recovered. The rest were killed, crippled, lost, or stolen; and the half that were recovered were so shaken and terrified that if a bird chirruped in the night they would be off their camp, and they were accordingly sold to the first local squatter who made an offer for them. The Conroys, father and son, have a kind of mysterious elation in the fact that they had been privileged to see the murderer of the Pikes going off to punishment in the devil's own patent horseless carriage. On this point there could be no mistake, because there were the wheel-tracks clear enough but never the mark of a horse's foot; and a faint smell of petroleum that lingered about the lagoon for some hours was ample testimony,—if any were needed—as to the supernatural character of the vision.

The Conroys gave up droving after this, and settled down on their farms in the mountains. They never see any English papers, which is a pity as they might have been interested in an article called *THE FIRST MOTOR-CAR IN THE BACK-BLOCKS* in which occurs this passage: "The appearance of the car at night, and the ringing of the bell and the sounding of the alarm, caused quite a commotion among a lot of cattle which were sleeping by the wayside under the care of their stockmen."

A. B. PATTERSON.

RED TORCHES AND WHITE.

THE literature of the open air and the literature of fictitious psychology run a close race to-day for public favour. The bulk indeed is not large, but the books on either side win attention and carry a far-reaching influence. The exponents of beauty and the anatomists of deformity bid each for a hearing, as did nearly three hundred years ago certain pure lovers of Nature and a brotherhood of writers who were frankly licentious in their tastes. Yet then as now a clean and true spirit asserted itself against the unchaste and unsound. To hold up the white torch of Nature in her own world is ever the vocation of those who, living in that world, find it full of light and beauty, of freshness, and strength, and rest. The antithetical school, from other perceptions, make a study of the ugly, mysterious, or tragic features of human nature, tracing relentless delineations of character (commonly feminine) with the presentment of bizarre personalities, till the very word *bizarre*, following a suggestive title, gives promise of a study of the lower nature, and casts a flash of scarlet upon the imagination.

Not long ago some women of leisure made a fashionable occupation of what was known in the cant of the day as *slumming*. It was a piquant inspection of squalid corners. To interpose a "slummy afternoon" between luncheon and dinner gave an excitement and shock to the nerves that was pleasantly allayed by the after contrast with refinement. Now, through the same intent, what may be called mental *slumming* has a vogue, and women of the hour make

pastime with sexual problems and social questions as their great-grandmothers did with the strings of their harps and the silks of their tambour-frames. It is true that in those times there were pioneers, at whom some shook their side-curls about their faces, and cried *fié*! while yet a few pursued their noble way superior alike to folly and to weakness,—for nothing is new in human nature but the manner of its expression. The first pioneer was Eve, not only by primogeniture, but by her desire to know, a characteristic that cost her Paradise, as it has cost many of her daughters their happiness since. After her we may trace a succession of like spirits throughout the ages, but at certain epochs some marked craze has broken out and run its course to extinction, and while it lasted it drew about every twentieth woman into the excitement of the pioneering it called for, if she did not actually become a pioneer.

When the history of mental epidemics is written it will be seen that never have women appeared to less advantage than in this craze of psychology. Zola, Ibsen, and others, who make of humanity one huge muck-heap, lead a train of them in their wake, peering into dark places to find curiosities of wickedness or perversion, and incontinently putting their discoveries into print, when they vie one with another in the distasteful pictures they present of their own sex.

Such employment may be called mental *slumming*, and it is worse than the parish *slumming* because that often led to altruism and useful

ness, while this makes for egotism and all uncharitableness. And the books "teach men so." "I wonder if people realise how dangerous they may be in their writings," says Lady Locke in *THE GREEN CARNATION*. "One has to choose between being dangerous and being dull," she is answered. Pioneers must be heard one above the other, and there are many in the field, so their books are not dull any more than they are sound or honest. Thoreau, out of his *WALDEN*, in the spirit of wholesome nature, expresses the effect of literature upon the normal mind when he says: "All health and success does me good, however far off and withdrawn it may appear; all disease and failure helps to make me sad and does me evil, however much sympathy it may have with me or I with it."

Apart from the personal result in money and notoriety of fictitious psychology, what purpose does it serve? Its authors would say they open subjects which must be faced. But if Ibsen and his followers prove anything they prove that these questions could hardly arise but for a previous swerving of the individual from the standard of right and honour. Consider *THE DOLL'S HOUSE*. Questions that involve the denial of God, of the recognised virtues, or of a Supreme Power over the life of man, are best answered by the results of the situations the questioners imagine for the actors in their dramas. So much for atheistic individualism. Let each man's opinion be what it may, he must at least allow that the well-being of the community is implied in St. Augustine's precept, "Love God and do as you please." With self in the seat of God, self ruled by the senses, self absolved from all moral law, what promise is given for the world's future? Yet what bizarre situations are supposed, what attrac-

tive demonstrations against convention both social and religious, what likeable characteristics in the Devil's disciples, what justifications of egotism. So specious are some of the arguments that we recall by an effort the beginning of things, when the first Egotist set himself in opposition to God, yet could not by rebellion achieve independence, nor in the after-time entirely corrupt the world. His own kingdom is the realisation of individualism. Nothing, indeed, brings out more strongly the happiness of solidarity and the misery of individualism than our conception of the constitution of Heaven and of Hell. The Place where the joy of one will be the joy of all contrasts with the Place where the misery of one will be independent of the misery of all.

But the psychologic, or realistic, or individualistic novel is not only written upon slippery premises, it has also the disadvantage of being profoundly dispiriting in its presentment of life. Why, while we passionately desire happiness should we persistently regard sorrow, and ignore that realism must have its sunlit scenes (even if they cannot be put upon paper) as well as its murky twilights? Why should we generally mean something nasty or boding when we proclaim psychology, forgetting that the World-Tree has beautiful dew-dropping branches that are still fresh, still inspiring, despite the age-long gnawing of beasts at its trunk and of Nidhögg at its roots? Why should we call a spade a spade where the mention of one at all is at least unnecessary, and why should we talk of facing things, when we look at them only through prepared peep-holes as at a Wiertz show? Women,—the pity of it!—provide some of these, by which we see merciless travesties of their own hearts,—the

heart of womanhood—displayed for the world to jeer at.

As hearts laid bare such pictures are too often accepted, but they resemble an autopsy only in their loathsomeness; they are not real. And the same may be said of morbid diaries, letters, and auto-delineations. No one betrays, consciously, the secret of his heart. The heart jealously guards its innermost intent even from the mind in the same body. It may be,—it often is—surprised; it is never unlocked. The beings we see through peep-holes of their own making afford studies of minds that, under the defect of physical degeneration, should figure only in technical treatises; through the peep-holes of fiction they bear as much relation to flesh and blood as did Frankenstein's monster, and the value of their presentment is naught.

Apart from unhealthy sensation, far better material for thought may be found in the characters of men and women who were actual psychological phenomena. Take Cowper, Shelley, Mme. Guyon, Robespierre, and countless personages of absorbing interest. So may be seen the true proportion of other lives to one life, with the full value of the circumstances that beset it for good and ill. In fiction, where the author plays the part of a creative providence, everything his imagination sets down is out of a phase of his own individuality. It is like a man playing chess with himself. In other words his creations are peculiar to himself, and are not in the least like the creations of anyone else, unless through imitation. Even when they are after his idea of some real personality, they are still strictly within the bounds of his conception of that personality. The Realist, like many a consulting physician, looks for the manifestations of the special disorder that his brain

has been occupied with, and his working field grows to a length and breadth that threatens to represent to himself humanity in full. As Max Nordau puts it in an extreme instance:

A Zola, filled from the outset with organically unpleasant sensations, perceives in the world those phenomena alone which accord with his organically fundamental disposition, and does not notice, or take into consideration those which differ from, or contradict it. . . . Zola's novels do not prove that things are badly managed in this world, but merely that Zola's nervous system is out of order.

It is different with real lives; only as we glean them it is more enlightening to read last of all such of a man's works as were written to impress the public with his own personality, because these are naturally exaggerations of himself. Sometimes people remain enigmas for the reason that we have no other personal testimony of their characters than their self-conscious writings. Marie Bashkirtseff's journal was written for the public eye. She had admittedly the desire to present a unique personality to fame, and while she wrote that end was in view. She took care never to be dull. Her aim was to leave her woman's mark on her times, that her name might "not be barely inscribed on her tombstone." What was her innermost self? We know little more than the froth of her. It is only certain that she was brilliantly clever, with an immense desire to be thought so, and that she had (with Mr. Shaw's permission) a very womanly disposition, in spite of, and partly by virtue of, her attempt to hide it. Surely all confessions and most autobiographies are poses; the inevitable exaggeration of a man's consciousness of his attitude towards his public. There must, naturally,

be an attitude. It is a garment for the mind—a bolt for the door—a curtain before the window. To have none is to be at some disadvantage in the world. No doubt Robinson Crusoe posed a little for Man Friday.

But enough of literature that is far more disquieting in its nature than the old sensational novel full of unslaked horrors, whose theme was of impulsive action rather than of closely analysed motive. We still have clean fiction, the work of men and women who are artists, but it is beside the purpose of this paper to touch upon it, or to recall the classic novels of the first half of the last century. The psychological novel was not then known in England, and few of those who feed their imagination upon it would have an appetite for *WAVERLEY* or *THE NEWCOMES*.

The natural rebound from unwholesome human nature should be healthy wild nature. A friend, in speaking to the writer, lately denounced the newest indecency of one of our female novelists and then said, not inconsequently: "Have you read *ELIZABETH AND HER GERMAN GARDEN*?" It was like sweet washing water to the mind after contact with unsanitariness of thought.

Whenever we will we may dwell upon some sunless aspect of misery. But where in literature is unalloyed happiness to be seen? Human histories do not show it. In fiction it is (or was) suggested in the last chapter, as fairy tales proclaim in six final words,—“And they lived happily ever after.” No one will arise, as Mr. Hubert Crackenthorpe proposed, to satisfy us with a “study of human happiness as fine, as vital, as anything we owe to Guy de Maupassant or to Ibsen.” To begin, we must translate happiness into a larger term to compare with these authors’ fine and vital studies of misery, and

language has coined no such word for our use. Happiness springs from no vital spark. It is a calm, if not a philosophical, state of mind induced by a combination of fortuitous circumstances. Serenity might express it. Etymologically, it approaches us from outside in the garb of *luck* or *chance*, and we grasp it and make it our own. Joy, on the other hand, springs within and is like the leaping of a flame, the glow of a blush. It is no state to be analysed, and classified, and preserved without complete loss of colour and perfume. We cannot go on feeling joy; where it becomes more than a hint of possibilities, it kills. When Adam and Eve were barred out of Paradise surely joy was barred in, that it might nevermore visit humanity as a state, but only as a recollection, or a rainbow token of a promise to be fulfilled hereafter. By these tokens alone can we receive the saying: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” Without the word joy there is no key to this exalted language, and but for our brief gleams of the thing signified, we could never surmise that some conception might be so much above our minds and experience. In speaking of temporal things it may be noted that the inspired writers use the phrase “joy and gladness” as who should say that ecstasy must give place to the more enduring feeling. Of eternal things they say, “fulness of joy,” “everlasting joy,” joy that cannot be conceived. And out of this difference we get the force of the promise that everlasting joy will crown those who enter into that new Eden, where pain and sorrow and sighing shall have no place. Joy will be “upon their heads,”—no diadem to be put on and off, but to be worn always, as kings and queens

wear their crowns in dreams of child-land.

The realists have branded joy as inartistic, but is not that because they, above all others, both lack the colours wherewith to paint it, and the ability wherewith to conceive it? Neither realistic pessimism nor mental slumming foster a state able to reflect gleams of illumination from the land that is very far off. How should those who batten upon rottenness in humanity have gleams of a beauty that belongs to a "land of good beyond the reach of sense"?

The word *joy* has suffered great misuse. It is consecrated to the highest and holiest emotions that can be felt; yet we are *overjoyed* to see an acquaintance, or to recover a lost thimble! Again, thoughtfully speaking, *unholy joy* is a most indefensible expression. The word *mirth* is at our service; cannot joy be left to express the "consecration and the poet's dream"? Assuredly it is no subject to invite the handling of the realists, nor can the practical moralists please our taste when they descant upon happiness that is like a perpetual pleasure-party with dishes, dresses, and love-making.

But why should we seek studies of human happiness in a setting of chairs, tables, and dress, when the ministers of joy in Nature are always trying to touch our imaginations with their own delights, calling importunately upon us to seek the fount of their own inspiration? It is this earnest desire of the inspired to open minds in their early freshness to the perception of the truest source of gladness, that led Jefferies, Kingsley, Macdonald and many others to bend their great faculties to the level of a little child's understanding.

"If," writes Richard Jefferies in *DEWY MORN*, "you wish your children to think deep things, to know

the holiest emotions, take them to the woods and hills and give them the freedom of the meadows." And what is true for children is no less true for those of larger growth, only they must possess one characteristic of childhood, namely, an inclination towards "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely." All worshippers of wild Nature know that she both demands purity in her lovers and confers it upon them. She is pure and wholesome and she lets her children feel it, revolting from such as are perverse and unclean. A pure mind goes to the inner seeing of Nature, even as a pure heart is necessary to see Nature's God. It is a pretty reflection that Jefferies takes from the leaf of the iris: "Pure," he says, "is the colour of the green flags, the slender, pointed blades, — let the thought be pure as the light that shines through that colour." May we not also see in the white iris, the flower of light (*la flambe blanche*), an emblem of the candid literature of clean Nature as it shines forth against the scarlet of that torch that would make inquisition into the dark corners of human hearts and minds?

Of the joy that interprets itself to the naturalist let Richard Jefferies speak once more, out of his great heart-picture *THE PAGEANT OF SUMMER*:

I seem as if I could feel all the glowing life the sunshine gives and the south wind calls into being. The endless grass, the endless leaves, the immense strength of the oak expanding, the unalloyed joy of finch and blackbird; from all of them I receive a little. Each gives me something of the pure joy they gather for themselves. In the blackbird's melody one note is mine; in the dance of the leaf shadows the formed maze is for me, though the motion is theirs; the flowers with a thousand faces have collected the kisses of the morning. Feeling with them, I receive some, at least, of their fulness of life.

Here is an arch-minister of the woods, lanes, and meadows, as they appear in sun and cloud, in summer and winter, in sabbath stillness and weekday stir. Has he missed one beauty of the flower, or one movement in the wood, or one note in the song of the bird? Alas, that a corner of earth's mantle should now cover him, sleeping, with all that he might yet have told us out of his fervent mind! For himself he lived long enough: "To see," he says, "so clearly, is to value so highly, and to feel too deeply." The enemy had sown tares in his field. His life was one of suffering. He was saddened by the apparent contradictions of a world that is not Eden, and his keen surmise of a joy existent beyond all joy that mortal mind can conceive, made him restless with desire unrealised.

It is, no doubt, our ever-growing refinement that makes us so sensitive to seeming contradictions, and to pain in human, or wild, nature. All suffering,—one might almost say all discomfort—offends our pampered nerves, till we are tempted to deny God because a cat plays with a mouse. These temptations could never beset a hardy people, who habitually held their very lives upon the tenure of a day; nor is it likely that the Lady Jane Greys, and the Mistress Elizabeth Pastons, who were treated daily by their parents to "nips and bobs" and occasional broken heads, ever dreamed of disaffection to God on account of worldly misery. In eliminating barbarity we seem also to have eliminated much of our stalwartness of mind. Our sense of proportion is weakened, and the Merry England of plague, tyrannies, and hard child-government is become pessimistic in the day of her emancipation from all these things.

Shall we ever again enter into the true inheritance of the earth, now so rich with accumulated treasure? Ours are the harvests of many labourers, some sad and some glad, but all pure and all beautiful. Open to us are the immemorial windows whence, looking eastward, we may forget the ugly things of the night of human life, or be led to regard them luminous-eyed. Nature is the nurse of gladness, and the mother of the ideal as of the true. Let realists scoff at our highest poets and their "respectable ideals"; we await their own quota of pleasure to aid the balance life is always trying to strike with sorrow. Deep in every heart is the conviction that humanity will never give up its standards. Nature must inspire ideals while the world lasts. A subtle influence is even now working against that which is unnatural and opposed to beauty. The very fashion of bilious literature now prevailing commands a counter supply of books of the fresh air, just as the late conditions of life called forth their antithesis of athletic exercise and out-door professions for women. Part of life's mystery lies in counter influences, which are seen to bear upon the race as upon the individual. Just now we all want more fresh air, a more healthy, less oblique outlook, a toning up, so to speak, of minds and bodies. The reaction has begun. Books that treat of Nature will not fail to receive their welcome, and do their lasting work,—whether it be the poetry of Nature or the principles of gardening, the records of a new Gilbert White or Isaac Walton, or the flower-coloured, fresh-air musings of a daughter of the sun like "Elizabeth." These all hold the white torch; in its light they were written and by its light they will be read.

DID NAPOLEON MEAN TO INVADE ENGLAND?

AT the end of the twenty-first book of the HISTORY OF THE CONSULATE AND THE EMPIRE, M. Thiers devotes a few words to "certain people who will look for mysteries where there are none," and who had persuaded themselves that Napoleon's great scheme for the invasion of this country was only a feint. He dismissed their super-subtle interpretation of his hero's actions as a mare's-nest. Nearly a thousand letters of the Emperor and his ministers leave no doubt on the subject in the opinion of M. Thiers, and he decided that the invasion was "a serious enterprise pursued during several years with genuine passion." Nobody who has gone to the real authority, that is to say, to the correspondence of the Emperor and his subordinates, will think the figure named by M. Thiers exaggerated. These letters were not meant for publication, or to throw dust in the eyes of dupes in London and Paris. They are confidential papers, and they are full of the most minute directions for the armament and organisation of troops, the purchase of material, the construction of transports and fighting vessels, the movements of fleets. The certain people who will find mysteries at all costs, wish us to believe Napoleon went through all this toil for no other purpose than to frighten England, and mislead Austria as to the use he meant to make of his army. M. Thiers had too much academic urbanity to say with Carlyle "to scrubby apprentices of tender years these things may be credible, to me they are not credible;" but

he was equally unable to accept wire-drawn explanations of a policy which is consistent and intelligible enough if only it is allowed to have meant just what it professed to mean.

But the scepticism of the ingenious persons who will persist in trying to produce better bread than can be made out of wheat, as Sancho Panza would have put it, has not been silenced even by the publication of the Emperor's correspondence. Its endurance can be understood when we remember how rarely men judge by the evidence only. The common delusion that it is always clever to assert the contrary of a general belief accounts for much. At all times we meet would-be clever fellows who find it obvious to milk the cow, and strive to impress us with the brilliancy of trying to milk the bull. English naval officers who are convinced of the physical impossibility of success, and clear-headed politicians who realise the awful risks, have from the first doubted whether so great a military conqueror as Napoleon could have meant to launch on what they are persuaded would have been a ruinous adventure. Metternich is the weightiest witness among the second class of unbelievers. The late Admiral Colomb and Admiral Sir R. Vesey Hamilton have in recent times spoken for the sea-officers, and have both shown themselves extremely reluctant to believe that the scheme of invasion was more than a mere scarecrow. The case for the negative has been very fairly stated by Mr. Sloane, the author of the latest Life of Napoleon. He himself is among those who

think the endless bustle of preparation at Boulogne, and the elaborate plot for bringing a strong naval force into the Channel, were only screens to cover the formation of an army to be used against Austria. After commenting on the manifest truth that if Napoleon had landed he would have been cut off from France by the concentration of the British fleet, he states the grounds on which he holds this belief. They are substantially these: that Napoleon at various times asserted that he never meant to carry the invasion out; that Miot de Mérito and Metternich thought he did not; that he gave scant encouragement to Fulton, the inventor of the marine steam-engine, the implied premiss being that he would have made more use of the new idea if he had been seriously intent on the venture; and that the preparations were made on a great scale in order to deceive so sagacious a people as the English. With the exception of the last, these reasons are extremely weak. Napoleon was so constant a liar in word and deed that his assertions, or his silence where a truthful man would have spoken, are alike worthless as evidence when taken by themselves. The opinion of Miot de Mérito has no weight. In his memoirs he says that everybody did believe in the invasion, and that doubts only arose in later years in the minds of himself and others. The Emperor was infallible, and the scheme failed. Therefore it was no scheme of his. This is the reasoning of Miot de Mérito, and it leads, when applied all round, to the remarkable result that the great man never went to Egypt, never made his grab at Spain, never invaded Russia, never tried to hold the line of the Elbe in 1813, and never played the stake of a frantic gambler at Waterloo. Such pleas are for the scrubby apprentice of tender years.

Metternich was indeed a strong man, and his mature conviction is not to be lightly dismissed. But we have to consider how it was formed and confirmed. We know on his own authority, which may be accepted without hesitation, for his honour was unimpeachable, that he never thought Napoleon capable of endeavouring to cross the Channel. In 1810, when he was in Paris after the Austrian marriage, he told the Emperor, while they were driving together, that this had always been his view, and was assured that he was right. To this, however, it has to be answered that one of the elements of Metternich's strength was a serene trust in his own infallible insight, and that his host was a master in the art of flattery, when he chose, and when it was not his cue to hector. "Ah, M. de Metternich, it is vain to try to deceive you," was the delicate thing to say in one form of words or another, since it suited the purpose in hand to please the confidential minister of his father-in-law. Metternich, too, had stood upon Afton Down in 1794, and had watched Lord Howe's fleet and convoy go out from the Solent and St. Helens. He had been profoundly impressed by the spectacle, and could not believe that Napoleon would put himself in the way of this mighty force. Yet he acknowledges that the Emperor was not only utterly ignorant of the real condition of England, but was impervious to instruction on the subject. He forgot, too, that he had seen this man during the campaign of 1813 raging in blind fury against all sense, and the very first principles of war, under the influence of his crazy passions and the frantic imaginations they produced. Metternich, in fact, could never quite grasp a character so alien to his own cold sanity. Something is wanting in the otherwise masterly

portrait he drew of the most reckless adventurer the world had known. Wellington supplied the deficiency when he called Bonaparte Jonathan Wild the Great,—a Jonathan to be sure with an infinite capability for work, a marvellous capacity in preparing means for the execution of his designs, and intent not merely on living in defiance of Bow Street, but on achieving an impossible dominion over the world.

Far too much has been made of the neglect shown to Fulton. One must look upon Napoleon as silly, which he certainly was not, before supposing, as Mr. Sloane and others have done, that he could not see the obvious truth that a generation, if not two, must pass before the marine steam-engine had got beyond the experimental stage, and before men enough could be trained to make the machines and work them in numbers. It was a fleet he needed, not a single vessel, and he could not "tarry the grinding." Some force may indeed be allowed to the contention that the scale of the apparatus collected does not necessarily prove that the invasion would have been attempted. On the supposition that the object was to frighten England, and persuade the Continent that he was intent on this one enterprise, something more was needed than had been provided under the old monarchy and before the peace of Amiens. Nothing in Napoleon's moral character would have made him hesitate to befool his subjects out of their labour and their money. Yet he did not like the waste of military resources, and on this hypothesis there was colossal waste. His device too must be added to the list of his other failures, for he did not cow England, nor did he deceive Austria and Russia into neglecting to increase their armies. Moreover, how are we to account for

his pertinacious efforts to bring a fleet together in the Channel where it could not have escaped our blows, if he did not look to it to give him command of the water for a brief space? Here he was coolly risking a part of his forces for no good. In his other deluded schemes there was a false appearance of a useful end to be achieved. Here there would have been none.

There is a passage in the correspondence which may enable us to correct his mendacities of one date by those of another. It had been already made public by M. Thiers, else it would probably have been kept back by the official editors under the Second Empire, and left to appear in M. Lecestre's collection of suppressed papers. In the beginning of 1804 the conspiracy of Moreau, Pichegru, and Georges Cadoudal was taking shape. As in a famous case in our own history there was a Main and a By in the plot. The Main was a scheme for military insurrection; the By was one for assassination. Napoleon knew that something was being prepared against him, and the encouragement given to his enemies by England was no secret. He was very eager to prove that the British Government was fomenting civil war in France, and hoped most ardently to secure some show of evidence that it was giving aid to assassins. Spencer Smith, our minister in Wurtemberg, and Drake, his colleague in Bavaria, presented the astute ruler of France with his opportunity. Acting under general directions from home they engaged, with the fussy solemnity of diplomatists who must be doing something, in cobweb intrigues. The French revolutionised Rome, and were indeed for ever trying to injure their enemies by promoting disorders in their dominions. Then why should

not we do the same, as Mr. Burke had recommended? It was excellently argued, if France had not been for the time weary to death of internal confusion, and if Napoleon had been the Pope.

He laid a trap for them, and they walked into it with a fatuity one could enjoy thoroughly if they had not discredited their country. A rascal named Méhée de la Touche, a hack police author, and underspur-leather in much grimy plotting of the revolutionary epoch, was employed to act as decoy. Drake believed him to be a genuine traitor, and sent him letters and money. Méhée was allowed to keep the money as his reward, and the letters went to Napoleon. The answers were of course dictated by no less an authority than the First Consul. When the game had lasted long enough he exposed his dupes. Before this date, on January 24th, 1804, he had instructed Méhée to tell the British Minister at Munich, that well-informed persons about the First Consul knew the Boulogne preparations to be a mere blind. The real invasion was to be made from Brest and the Texel, and to be directed against Ireland. Though the flotilla was costly it was less wasteful than might be supposed, since the vessels composing it would all be used for trade; and so on through a long string of more or less plausible lies, neatly constructed to persuade Mr. Drake that he was getting valuable information. On the theory formed by Metternich, and accepted by Mr. Sloane and others, Napoleon was trying to deceive the British Government by telling it the truth in the hope that it would refuse to take his word. It is a device which has been used at times with shining success. Yet there was a risk that he would over-reach himself, and

defeat his own ends by quieting the fears it was his interest to inspire. If, however, he aimed at throwing the British Government off the scent, and at turning its attention away from the real line of invasion, this is precisely what he would have said; but then we have to conclude that he really did mean to try to land an army on the coast of Kent.

It is always possible to make out a show of a case on any side by quoting isolated documents and actions, without their correctives or connections. The critical course is to look at the whole body of the evidence, which by no means includes mere expressions of opinion on the part of spectators who, however honest or sagacious, were not in a position to know the truth. The evidence for or against the sincerity of Napoleon's intention to invade England if he could, must be sought in his confidential letters to his officers, or ministers, and in the complete series of his actions. The reader need be in no doubt where to go for them. They are all to be found in four volumes of the Correspondence published by order of Napoleon the Third and numbered eight to eleven. It is well to supplement them by the first volume of M. Lecestre's edition of the suppressed papers. Of course there is much which has no direct connection with the invasion. The great majority of the documents relate to general politics and to administration. Weighty despatches to the King of Prussia, or the Landamman of Switzerland jostle orders on minute points. The great man is found instructing his police to discover what some impudent journalist meant by letting the public know that a negro potentate in Hayti had established a Legion of Honour. The regenerator of France detected

a gibe at his own institution, and was resolved to make an example. No jokes were to be suffered in France except on the legitimate subject of the deluded ignorance of the blind islanders who dared to oppose the great nation. M. Lecestre has kindly rescued an order for the application of the thumbscrew to recalcitrant witnesses, omitted by the careful piety of Napoleon the Third. But from May, 1803, to August, 1805, there is a steady flow of questions, orders, and decisions relating to the invasion. Lord Whitworth left France in the middle of May, 1803. Before the end of the month instructions were flying out to Barbé-Marbois, the Minister of the Treasury, and to Decrès, the Minister of Marine, to repair, buy, or build flat-bottomed boats. The series closes on August 22nd, 1805, with the last fierce order to Villeneuve to come on from Brest, and appear in the Channel if only for a day, then—"England is ours. We are all ready, everything is embarked."

The papers may be classed under two heads. One covers those relating to the construction, armament, and movements of the flotilla, and the organisation of the troops to be carried. Under the other must be put the elaborate plans for bringing about a temporary concentration of a superior naval force in the Channel to protect the invasion. The second are on the whole of the most value as evidence of Napoleon's real meaning. By making a great effort of the kind of sagacity which (in the usual as well as the ecclesiastical sense) invents mare's-nests, it is just possible to talk oneself into an artificial belief that Napoleon spent millions of money on flat-bottomed boats, guns, stores, and coast-batteries for his flotilla, without the intention of sending it to sea. It

is quite impossible to reconcile his orders to Villeneuve with the most elementary common sense, unless he is credited with such wisdom, and honesty, as there was in the readiness to sacrifice his fleet, if need be, in order to secure the passage of his army. To spend it for this purpose might have been the act of a gambler. Egypt and Russia answer for his capacity to play the part. But to bring the squadrons, French and Spanish, from Toulon, Cadiz, Ferrol, Rochefort, and Brest into the waters between the Lizard and the South Foreland, only to make a demonstration, would have been an act worthy perhaps of the morality of Napoleon, but much more consistent with the intelligence of Manuel Godoy, Duke of Alcudia and Prince of the Peace. They would have been rounded up without a place of refuge on a shallow coast where the British fleet would have had them at its mercy. At the very best they could only have run through the Straits of Dover before a favourable westerly wind to take hiding in the Scheldt or the Texel. Then England would have been relieved from the burden of blockade elsewhere, and would have had all her enemies in one pound, opposite her own shores.

For my poor part, though quite unable to share the adoration for Napoleon's genius professed by many, and more especially by soldiers, I find it impossible to believe that he prepared the flotilla in wanton waste meaning it to be a scarecrow and nothing else. That he said he did to Metternich, or to Miot de Mérito (whom he described by the way in 1814 as an imbecile) is very intelligible. The scheme had failed, and it was his constant practice to falsify facts, or papers, in order to conceal his mistakes. We know, for instance, how he interpolated pass-

ages into despatches relating to the seizure of Spain to show that he had foreseen the national rising, and that he deceived Sir William Napier. But just as his policy in 1808 is incompatible with any foresight of his as to its consequences, so his assertion that he never meant to sail for our shores from Boulogne cannot be reconciled with his actions from May, 1803, to August, 1805. In that period he prepared two thousand flat-bottomed gun-vessels, and gunboats, or transports. The fighting craft cost to build from four thousand to thirty thousand francs each, for the hull alone. The transports cost to build, to buy, or to repair, taking one with another, at least as much as the smaller sum. Some of these flat-bottomed boats and transports were extorted from allies, or from what he was pleased to call the voluntary gifts of his subjects. Still he knew that what was taken in this way was to be deducted from the general resources at his disposal. The direct cost to him cannot have been less than a million sterling even when we leave aside the Dutch share and the voluntary gifts. To this is to be added the outlay on rigging, fitting, and armament with eight thousand pieces of ordnance. Nor is this all. To cover the concentration of the flotilla it was necessary to erect batteries all along the coast from Havre to Boulogne, and to clear out the shallow sandy harbours. Three thousand men were ordered to be engaged in the last named work at Ambleteuse alone in January, 1804, under the direction of the engineer Sganzin. And this was but a small part of the whole labour performed. The clearing out of these wretched harbours was not one of those things which were done when they were done. No sooner were they deepened than the drift of the Channel began to fill them again.

As much toil and outlay was needed to preserve as to make the harbours. When the invasion scheme was really given up they soon filled again, and the flat-bottomed boats rotted in, or on, the sand. I have to confess my ignorance whether an exact calculation has ever been made of the outlay on the flotilla and its adjuncts, apart from the other expenses of his government. Speaking subject to correction, I do not think it can be put at less than four millions sterling. Meanwhile great sums were being spent at Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon to form a powerful sea-going fleet, while the total revenue of France was between eighteen and nineteen millions. To assume this burden in the hope of striking at the heart of England may have been mad, considering the magnitude of the obstacles to be overcome, but to take it for show alone, in the deluded confidence that Perfidious Albion would be "frighted with false fires," would have been silly.

If the preparations were meant for the home and foreign galleries only they were certainly carried out with a most artistic finish. Too much need not be made of such documents as an order to Soult, commanding the camp at Saint Omer, and dated March 2nd, 1804. It is one of scores of the same character addressed to him, to Davout, to Marmont, to Berthier, to Decrès, Bruix, and Ganteaume, all confidential, and all entailing expenditure of work and money. The subject is the provision of horse-boxes and horses, to the number of seven thousand two hundred, to be carried in the flotilla. There was no necessary waste here, since, invasion or no invasion, the boxes would always be useful, and as for the horses, no doubt they trotted and galloped away from Boulogne to lay their bones on the roadsides or battle-fields of Germany,

and in the mud of Poland, together with their drivers or riders. But what are we to make of an order dated October 5th, 1803, and sent to the Ministers of the Treasury and of War? It directs the formation of a corps of one hundred and seventeen guide-interpreters, all less than thirty-five, all knowing English and having lived in England. Irish exiles were to be allowed to join. The pay is on the scale of the dragoons, and not even the very uniform is overlooked. As we never had the advantage of seeing these persons among us the reader may be interested to learn that they wore dragon-green coats with red lining, and crimson flaps, cuffs, and trimmings; white leather breeches, American boots with bronzed iron spurs finished off the nether man not without military elegance. Imagination boggles at the spectacle of the First Consul stopping in the middle, or late in the evening, of the hardest day's work done by any man in Europe, to make regulations for the coats, breeches, and even the very white hussar buttons of his guide-interpreters, the whole thing being, on the hypothesis of Metternich and "that imbecile Miot," part of a solemn practical joke of colossal scale, and costing millions, in the manner of Theodore Hook.

One must surely have a diseased appetite for finding mysteries to see in this, which is but one among hundreds of examples, anything but proof of unresting attention to detail. Napoleon boasted, and here we cannot but take his word for we have an overflowing measure of evidence of its truth, that he had never discovered the limit to his power of work. In the end he became lunatic, and his mind lived in a world of dreams spun by itself, but he wrought for unattainable ends with an inexhaustible faculty for fram-

ing the practical means. On the supposition that he really did intend to make his dash when the time came, nothing is easier to understand than the formation of the guide-interpreters. It is only impossible to account for them on the theory that they were never to be used. They are quoted here simply as a characteristic specimen of the thoroughness of the care shown to fit the expedition down to the last button on the gaiters. It would be easy, but would also be superfluous, to fill more pages than could be spared for the purpose with similar examples. The number and classification of the vessels to be used for fighting and transport, the distribution of men, horses, and stores, the number of bundles of hay and rounds of ammunition, the order of anchorage, of entry and of exit, are regulated with an exactness only to be appreciated from the correspondence. Philip the Second did not organise his Armada more minutely, nor with more toil to himself; and Philip sat in the middle of his spider-web in the Escorial writing, writing, writing. His affairs were as complicated as Napoleon's, but he directed them from his desk. The Corsican was for ever on the move, and in the saddle, and yet he wrote as much as Philip the Prudent. He had Germany and Russia to watch, Switzerland to settle, the formation of a code of laws to overlook, conspiracies to crush, the Empire to found, and the Pope to wheedle. Withal he looked into everything with his own eyes, from Milan to Boulogne. And there are those who can believe that in addition to it all, he could sacrifice millions of money for an empty demonstration, and not only so but condemn himself to endless extra work, begun sometimes at eleven at night. In one of his letters to his police in these months he gives

them orders to look into the truth of a rumour that a sect of convulsionists and flagellants had appeared in France. If any such survivals of the Middle Ages did indeed linger on they had more regard for their comfort, and were less foolish than their master. They at least expected to secure heaven by scoring their shoulders with a discipline which is a moderate price to pay for everlasting felicity.

Let us turn from the flotilla to the orders given to the fleet, and see what can be gathered from them as to the sincerity of Napoleon's resolution to invade. It is known that his ideas as expressed in his letters and by his reported words underwent successive modifications between 1803 and 1805. At first he planned, or appeared to plan, to cross the Narrow Seas in a calm or a fog with the flat-bottomed boats alone. His naval officers, headed by Decrès who had an extraordinary eye for the weak side of the designs of others, brought him to understand that the risk was too great. Then he began to plan how to gather a French naval force in the Channel so as to obtain a temporary local superiority, and have the means of covering the passage. He had at first permitted Spain to keep what he was pleased to call her neutrality on condition of the payment of a heavy subsidy. The greater part of the sums promised never reached his exchequer, and soon the British Government took measures to see that none should. It seized Bustamente's galleons coming home from Mexico with the treasure, and forced Spain into war. The measure was amply justified, and needs no better excuse than is supplied by the fury of Napoleon. The outbreak of the war between Spain and England deprived him of all prospect of subsidy, but it gave him the command of the Spanish

fleet. It was then that his great and complicated scheme for the concentration of sixty French and Spanish battle-ships in the Channel took its final shape. Everybody knows its main lines, how Villeneuve was to slip out of Toulon, sail for the West Indies, come back after misleading Nelson, pick up the ships of the two nations at Ferrol, come on to Brest, join Ganteaume, and sweep the Channel. We know too how it failed, partly by the pusillanimity of Villeneuve, who like Tourville was "a coward in head though not in heart." There were modifications in details, and Napoleon played with subsidiary schemes for expeditions to Ireland, and to the Indies East and West. But concentration is the dominating purpose all through. The variation on the surface of Napoleon's mind, and his habit of putting down alternative plans on paper to get them clear to himself, very much as Lord Burleigh drew up his elaborate columns of *pros* and *cons*, has puzzled some students not familiar with his ways. They were also a fertile source of confusion to his officers. It is then perhaps not surprising that there are some who cannot believe that a man who could propose so many varying courses could be serious as to the main end.

When, however, his habits of work are remembered, it is easy to brush aside the irrelevances, and to separate the mere suggestions and alternative courses from the central idea. What that was is stated in unequivocal terms in instructions to Villeneuve dated May 8th, 1805. "The principal end of the whole operation," he wrote, "is to obtain the superiority for us before Boulogne for a few days." Two drafts of the instructions were made, differing in details, but not in the least in essentials. He leaves Villeneuve a

wide latitude as to whether he will look into Rochefort to pick up the ships there or not, come close to Brest to join Ganteaume, or pass north of the blockading fleet, slip round the Lizard and so come on to Boulogne; or even whether he will take the route by the north of Scotland, rally the Dutch vessels in the Texel, and come down from the north. At the end his admiral is told that if, in consequence of events in America, or on the course of his voyage, he cannot advance from Ferrol, he is to go back to Cadiz, and make a fresh start, but that the Emperor will hear of his acting thus with great regret. How far this justified Villeneuve in turning to the south, after the action with Calder, whether that engagement was such an event as the then newly made Emperor contemplated or not, whether the artful devices for slipping through the watch of the British navy and concentrating off Boulogne had any real chance of success, are disputable points. It would be interesting to discuss them, but for the present they are not in the reference. The question is did Napoleon really mean to try the invasion? To me it seems clear that he did, and that unless he did, the orders he undoubtedly drew up for Villeneuve are not to be understood.

The sceptics are much given to pointing out that supposing him to have landed and to have beaten the first army opposed to him, he would still have been cut off, and finally crushed under the might of Britain. In later years he talked in this strain himself when he wished to persuade dupes that he had always been right. Perhaps, or if patriotism prefers to have it so, then certainly this would have happened. We are not concerned with our own actions, but with his beliefs. Now it was his conviction at the time that if he could win a

great battle in Kent and march to London, the British Government would yield. We think that he was in error, and that the proud energy of our race would have enabled us to make good the want of those physical advantages of space or mountainous country, the thin population, and the poverty which helped the national resistance of Spain and Russia. Allow that it was so, and still we may ask why Napoleon, who miscalculated the results of the occupations of Madrid and Moscow, should not also have been in error as to the probable consequences of his entry into London. The whole of his life is on record to show that this was precisely the kind of blunder he was to be expected to make. And since he reasoned thus, why should he have hesitated to run the risk of having his communications with France cut? It would have been no matter if they had been, when England was prostrated by a blow at the heart. Her navy would have been paralysed with the rest of the body of the State. On his hypothesis, in fact, the peril of interrupted communications was not worth considering. If the worst came to the worst, he could try to slip over the Straits in a small boat. He had navigated the whole length of the Mediterranean when it was swarming with our cruisers, and could well take his chance of crossing the few miles between the east end of Kent and Boulogne. Smugglers and small privateers escaped our vigilance in these very waters all through the war, as he well knew. If he had brought an army over to be locked up and destroyed, and could have got back himself, it is very doubtful whether his power in France would have been diminished. He had already deserted one army in Egypt and had returned to become the

master of his country. A few years later he was to lead four hundred thousand Frenchmen to perish miserably in Russia, and to find the nation as submissive to him as ever when he posted back to Paris. To make England taste the horrors of invasion, and shake her confidence in the power of the fleet to keep her shores inviolate, was in itself an object worth the expenditure of a hundred thousand men to him. He had provided for giving Austria enough to keep her busy in Bavaria, if she took up arms during his absence. A few successes of hers to the east of the Rhine would have signified nothing if England was smitten down.

The nature of the preparations made at Boulogne, and their scale, the toil undergone by Napoleon himself in his cabinet, his character, his interests, his estimate of the

probable conduct of this country, all work together to confirm the sincerity of his intention to invade if he could obtain the few days of security required for the passage of his flotilla. There was nothing to give probability to the contrary hypothesis but the opinion of men who either did not know the evidence, or have not shown they could use it, his own declarations when he had a motive for altering the truth, and the assumption that he never could have meant to try so mad an enterprise, which would be good in the case of Frederick the Great, but is contrary to all probability with the man who brought himself to St. Helena by frantic obstinacy in trying to do the impossible. The two sides are not, as Bacon might have said, equipollent.

DAVID HANNAY.

NATIONAL GAMES AND THE NATIONAL CHARACTER.

A GOOD deal of solemn nonsense has been talked on the connection of games and morality and social dealing; and the grandiloquence has been encouraged by the astonishing interest shown by the public in a race between two yachts of the New York and Royal Ulster clubs. It is a pity that men or nations cannot play a game together without being convicted of "cementing the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race." But though the effect of games on international politics is a subject that has given occasion for some extremely fatuous extravagances, their value as a touchstone of character is another matter. Games take men unawares too often to let hypocrisy escape, and the bare result of competition is destructive of humbug; there is room in them for bad temper and for good comradeship, and they share with the weather the power to bridge the conversational difficulty which besets what is called the Anglo-Saxon race. If you travel in a third-class carriage on a suburban line the men will almost always be talking of one game or another, and the reason is not so much that the interest is supreme, as that the subject is easy of approach and common to every grade of society. In other words, games are worth serious consideration chiefly by reason of an indirect, unessential virtue. They constitute a sort of freemasonry between people who could have nothing else in common, and, if not the cause, are often the occasion of valuable social amenities. National, even more distinctly than individual, characteristics come out in the nature

of the national games and in the manner of playing them. We do not believe, for example, that the Americans will ever take to cricket as they have taken to base-ball, because it gives insufficient room for either the cunning or the restless energy that their athletes demand. A summer's day out in the long field to Shrewsbury and Gunn would tear an American athlete's patience to tatters. Thus, in spite of the excellence and the enthusiasm of the gentlemen of Philadelphia, and in spite of the threat lately uttered by one of the Americans that they were going to learn cricket in order to beat us at that game too, it is not likely to grow popular in America,—till America grows old.

We have met Americans at most other games,—a word which rightly understood should include both athletics and rowing—and always their national characteristics have appeared with curious distinctness and uniformity in their methods of competition. On the whole we are perhaps more prone to misunderstand Americans than foreigners. We expect them to resemble us so much, and the actual resemblance is so little. They come from Puritans and Quakers, and by the possession of some of the inherited qualities suggest the possession of the others,—to our disappointment.

In talking to their athletes, and in reading their athletic critics, political parallels are continually suggested. The capture of Aguinaldo, smart beyond the reach of dignity, was prepared on the football-field,—a

parallel to Waterloo and the playing-fields of Eton; and the extension of the Monroe doctrine is suggested in the preliminaries of a yacht-race. But those who have had a glimpse into American character through games will have a higher opinion of it than if the knowledge came through politics. One sees in the athletes that the defects are the defects of virtues, and the qualities, which seem abominable in isolation, may look almost admirable when in due relation with character.

The intelligent foreigner who comes over to enquire into English ways is astonished by nothing so much as by our absorbing interest in games. A glance at the papers on the third day of last September would, could he have read them, have given him a fine illustration of the national mania. It was written how ten thousand people had assembled at the Crystal Palace to see a match at football. There were long descriptions of a cricket-match at the Oval, where a professional player was expected to "establish a record"; there were columns concerned with partridge-shooting; there were paragraphs about the visit of a university athletic team to Canada; there were head-lines about the yacht-race and the prospects of the COLUMBIA, CONSTITUTION, and SHAMROCK. Odd corners were filled up with the results of tournaments at croquet and tennis, and of local regattas. The King was reported to be playing golf in Germany. The intelligent foreigner might well wonder; but our national keenness for games would not seem so extravagant to a Frenchman as American keenness seems to an Englishman. The quality of their keenness is on a different plane. To many Americans the winning of a game has become an absolute end in itself. At the uni-

versities, at Princetown and Harvard, for instance, the men train for the football-matches with months of serious work, and on the actual day play with an *abandon* that is unknown in England. Members of a defeated team will be seen afterwards in almost a paroxysm of tears, overcome by the combination of exhaustion and disappointment. An American who was taken to the last University football-match was struck by nothing so much as by the appearance of the men in the interval. "But where are the stretchers, the bandages, the 'refreshers,' the spare men?" he asked; and when he was told that it was not permitted to replace a man who was incapacitated, he could murmur nothing but, "That is a feature." The permission to use substitutes for wounded men was caused in America by a desire to lessen the roughness, the help of a fresh man towards the end of a game being too great an advantage to give away if it could be helped. This playing of games with more than the rigour of Mrs. Battle has produced a serious movement for their suppression. The authorities absolutely forbade football in the Government naval and military schools, on the ground that it was bad both for the body and mind. Curiously enough, almost at the same moment that this ban was passed in America, definite steps were being taken in England to encourage football in the corresponding military and naval establishments. Comparative statistics of this nature will show that, in spite of the excessive dominance of professionalism in England, it is true on the whole to say that the British and American athletes stand to each other almost as amateurs to professionals. Mr. Gaspar Whitney, in his excellent *SPORTING PILGRIMAGE*, has some sensible words on this point.

It is in the lesser preparation, and in the "business," if I may use the word,—and I hope I shall be correctly interpreted—that leads up to and surrounds our athletic contests, that the Englishman sets us a good example. Particularly would I like to see its softening influences at work on the hard commercial atmosphere that envelopes our big football-matches, in diminishing the amount of money we annually expend fitting teams for contests, in moderating the speculative eye we have for large gate-receipts, and on the mystery that unnecessarily surrounds so much of the 'Varsity crew's work as ignores the undergraduate, and would leave him out of touch with it altogether but for his superabundant enthusiasm and loyalty that surmount all obstacles. Here, I think, we can indeed learn a much-needed lesson, nor can we learn it too quickly.

How fully Americans feel that their athletics may benefit by contact with the English spirit has been proved by the anticipatory discussions that led up to the recent athletic visit of our two universities. Yale and Harvard wished to make a stand against prevailing sentiments, and felt that in their campaign on behalf of the purity of the athletic spirit it would be an immense advantage to have the prestige of association with Oxford and Cambridge. Yet we must remember, while priding ourselves that England is the home of the athletic spirit, that strictly speaking every man who goes up to an American university is a seeker after education and an academic help in his after career in a very much more serious degree than many English undergraduates. The most obvious and tempting athletic distinction for any boy who has won eminence in his school games is, in the modern jargon, to "get a blue," to row for his university, that is to say, or to play for it at one of the many games, from cricket, tennis, and rackets downwards, which now find favour among our "young barbarians ;"

and to this ambition a good deal of the excellence of university athletes is due. This fact should be put against the complaint commonly raised in England that the American universities have made attractive offers to induce prominent athletes to become members of their societies.

This professionalism of spirit, if the phrase be allowed, which seems to Englishmen to mark American players is in essence the result of keenness and courage and that zest of competition which, according to M. Demolins, is the cause of "Anglo-Saxon superiority." After an expressive phrase the American "means winning," and this purpose has become so intense that it begins to dominate all other motives. Personal respect, manly courage, in some cases patriotism, give an added glamour to the intention ; but, whether by a perversion of natural virtues or by their over-development, winning is the dominant motive in every American. One may say,—the qualification will come later—that in America only success succeeds and only failure is contemptible. We are fond of winning in England. Alfred was lately held up as the first Englishman who did not know when he was beaten, and after a thousand years his successors are like him. But among English players of games there is an ambition, which may perhaps be described as aristocratic, first to play in style and according to the strictest etiquette ; and since this aristocratic emphasis on manner has developed along with the desire to win, the two ambitions have continued to qualify each other to good effect. It is true that in some cases both have reached an extravagant pitch ; some professionals strive to win at all hazards to honesty, and some amateurs to play in form to the detriment of success. Roughly

speaking, one may say that the two ambitions vary directly with the proportional social positions of the players. In the game of the people, which beyond all question is professional football, the players have resorted to devices of such perverse ingenuity as would shame American players. The professional football-player, when he can avoid the argus-eyed referee, will use every trick he knows to damage any prominent opponent he can. If he thinks it worth while to face the penalty he will openly commit his "intentional fouls," to use the ugly phrasing of the football-rules. In fact the rules of the game have here so much altered to check the professional's unqualified intention to win by some device or other, that amateurs are protesting with feelings of keen resentment against being subjected to the same code of laws. A genuine amateur, who enjoys an open charge, does not like to be penalised for an intentional foul; nor is it good for the spirit of the game that he should be subjected to this obloquy. To go to the other social extreme, a great cricketer, and the most charming of critics, has complained that cricketers at Eton are taught to pay such strict adherence to the ideal perfection of style, as seen, let us say, in a Palaiet, that they are becoming incapable of making runs except under perfect conditions. Certainly in respect to cricket the value put upon style in and for itself is ludicrous, in spite of the prominent example of W. G. Grace, whom any Eton boy could be competent to correct for defects of style.

These, however, are extreme cases. It remains true that in the normal English athlete (the word is used as co-extensive with *ἡ γυμναστική*) the desire to win is duly qualified by two co-existent ambitions,—the

desire to play well and the desire to be a gentleman. In the perfect sportsman, as in the Happy Warrior, there is a master bias towards the gentle qualities. In the definition of a sportsman the master attributes, though all the phrases may be differently interpreted, are capacity, style, generosity. But in the first place it is essential that in every game the art of winning should be made secondary to the development of the gentle, or, if the word is preferred, the gentlemanlike, qualities; and in the second it is well for the game and the player that some emphasis should be laid on the etiquette of manner. "Bad form" is a true phrase of sportsmanlike criticism. The French and the Italians have given a fine instance of the worth of etiquette in the game of fencing. You are forced to play according to many unwritten rules, and the written rules are so precise as to have made the game, in the good sense of the word, aristocratic. No one is accepted as a player till he has graduated in manner. To give one of many examples you may not "stab," though an indifferent player could for a little upset the most skilful by indulging in this natural mode of attack. But no fencer, — in the past, not even for his life — dares to stab; it is not etiquette, not after the aristocratic manner; in a double sense it is bad form. Almost every sportsman in England is continually forced to conform to a similar canon of etiquette. Many things are regarded as bad form which in fact are natural and harmless enough. Civilisation, along with its improvements, generally exaggerates its canons and makes them too artificial; just as that curious moral criterion known as schoolboy honour glorifies actions which more

natural moralists, not altered by the artificial life of congregated youth, would put down as silly, if not wrong. But the schoolboy is made by his standard of honour, and may be properly judged by the measure of his approach to the standard. Just so the character of the British sportsman has been maintained at its high level by the established canons of form. To avoid shooting birds that get up nearer the next gun is a lesson in unselfishness; not to lurk as nearly as possible "off-side" is to avoid the suspicion of unfairness; to send a rowing coach to a sister university, and to accept the offer, is a display of the zest of competition in which mere desire to win is not reckoned; the refusal, in a recent football-match, of a captain to appeal against a try, though a technical rule had been broken, was a really generous obedience to the law of form.

We do not wish to say that the Americans have not an almost intense admiration for the spirit of sport, but America is a new country; there is a lack of precedent, a lack of etiquette, a contempt of manner, a respect for present success which destroys admiration for past effort, and though this freshness has very great compensating advantages, we think that American sportsmen suffer from want of respect for form. At any rate the difference between the two countries' ideas will be clear in almost any sport or game that can be mentioned. In the first place there is always an atmosphere of mystery about the preparation of American athletes. In the lawn-tennis championship at Wimbledon last year the two American players practised a good deal and played many games in England before the championship; but it was bruited about that they were "keeping a serve up their sleeve," to use the prevailing

idiom, and in fact they had studiously avoided giving away the secret of this strange device. Possibly something was gained by this secrecy; indeed it was apparent just at first that both their opponents, the Dohertys, were a little put out by the unexpected way the ball came off the ground; but was the odd point or two worth the while? The training performances of their running men are hedged in by devices of secrecy, and the men subjected like slaves, or professionals, to the rigorous dominion of the professional coach, who as often as not talks at large to reporters and boasts, without much regard to fact, of the doings of "my men." As to the mystery surrounding the training of the university eights in America Mr. Whitney, the American Pilgrim, will explain himself.

I am sure that throughout my study of English university athletics nothing made a greater impression on me than the sportsmanlike feeling which exists, and is perfectly apparent to whosoever cares to look, between Oxford and Cambridge crews and teams. Whatever one crew does at Putney the other may see,—if it likes. There is no attempt at stealing away, no substitutes sent out to watch and to report. Each is on the Thames to perfect its work, and the other is at liberty to "size it up" as much as it may wish. It is quite common for one crew to follow in its steam-launch the rowing of the other. Indeed the Cambridge captain only a few days before the race this year, when asked if he had any objections, replied: "Not a bit. Follow all you like, and say what you please." And he meant it. While at Putney members of the Oxford crew will occasionally dine at the Cambridge training-table, and the latter return the courtesy in kind. The men do not eye one another askance, and there is none of the embarrassment that attends the annual Harvard-Yale visitation when the crews are in quarters at New London.

And again he writes in the same strain:

I cannot refrain from recounting another incident to yet further accentuate this sportsmanlike spirit and perfect willingness that all London, or the whole world, should see the crews at practice, if it cared to make the journey to Putney. The first morning I went to Putney, Mr. Lehmann, one of the two Oxford coaches, whom I had met, was detained in town, and did not turn up; therefore I asked a boatman to point out to me the other coach Mr. McLean, and, approaching the latter, asked if the crew was going out, and when. With recollections of New London experiences I expected to have a well-bred, non-committal English stare turned full upon me. Judge, then, my surprise when Mr. McLean informed me, with as much consideration as though I were the most honoured old "blue," that the crew was going out in about half an hour but only for a short paddle, and that if I wanted to see it at work, I had better come that afternoon, when the men would launch their boat at a "quarter before three." And he knew me at that time only as one of the several hundred interested spectators standing on the river-bank waiting for the crew to bring out its boat. Fancy asking a Yale or Harvard coach at what time the crew would come out, and the best place to see it at work! Perhaps a stranger would be told all about it,—perhaps!

There is, in a word, too much business about American games; the secrecy, the professional trainers, the length of training, the value of the gate-money, the amount spent by the universities on the clubs, combine to soil the spirit which we call sportsmanlike.

If we put aside the professionals, a class from whom American sport is happily more free than English, players of games may be said to have developed a valuable code of honour which may be indicated under the happy metaphor, *playing the game*. To play the game is to put aside selfishness, not only scrupulously to observe rules written and unwritten, but to keep a pure desire to regulate every effort to victory by the senti-

ment of clean honour. As a fencer hands back his weapon to the opponent he disarms, a man who plays the game will love a "fair field and no favour" more than a victory won by cunning, or what is popularly known as sharp practice. There is of course as strict an honour among American athletes as among ours; but comparing the two codes it does seem to us that the quality of cunning, or acuteness, is recognised in America as a virtue, almost without qualification. Americans, to quote our previous example, would laud the capture of Aguinaldo as a good typical instance of playing the game. For it is a virtue to be more acute than an opponent, not only in love and war but in games, in politics, in business. The athlete conceals his skill, the money-maker makes a corner in a staple of life, the politician revokes a treaty.

Games, we have said, occupy to an extreme degree the interests of Americans. It is the more important, therefore, that those who are in authority over the games of the nation should see to it that the sportsmanlike spirit breathes through them all. There is in England much reason to regret the frequent presence of the sort of person who is called idiomatically the pot-hunter,—the pseudo-amateur who thinks of money first and sport afterwards. We believe that this sort of financial athlete is much rarer in America; his place is taken by the victory-hunter; but it remains that nowhere in the world is the spirit of sport more effective for good than in the English universities,—the repositories of sporting honour—and the more of this spirit that is spread abroad by international meetings the better.

We have said that the actual money-making amateur is rare among Americans, and they also mean to

prevent his development by every effort in their power. With that quickness of action which marks them in all departments of life the fear of the insinuation of the quasi-amateur has been followed immediately by preventive measures; and that in the most unexpected of games. Golf has grown popular in America with even greater suddenness than in England, and mushroom hotels have sprung up at the edges of the various links. The interests of the links and the hotels naturally coincide and, in order to popularise both, inducements of all sorts have been held out to attract well-known players to the several spots. The most usual form of inducement has been an advertisement offering "board and transportation,"—not for life—to any well-known golf-player who will stay at the hotel. The growing scandal of this and similar advertisements was thought so serious that the authorities responsible for the regulation of the game have thought it necessary at all costs to prevent the acceptance of any such offer by an amateur. They have, therefore, passed a law which takes its stand as the most drastic that has yet been known in any game. By the new definition an amateur may accept no expenses at all even from his club; he may not even occupy a salaried post in connection with a club, and he may not play the game under an assumed name. This may be welcomed as a whole-hearted attempt to scotch professionalism; but the ruling, though perhaps not too Draconian in theory, carries its qualifications with it. The post of secretary to a club often entails arduous work and, while it demands a gentleman to fill it, merits payment.

To give one example of the working of the law: a well-known English amateur, a champion at his game, was lately invited to go out to New York to regulate some clubs there according to English methods. He gave his time and interest to the work, and was doing valuable service which was much appreciated, when he discovered that by accepting a salary he was losing his status as an amateur. He could not afford to do the work without remuneration, and found himself, to the disappointment of his hosts and to his own great disadvantage, forced both to give up his salary and to borrow money to make good what he had already received. With regard to expenses,—the "board and transportation" of the American advertisements—many good amateurs in England would be unable to play regularly for their county clubs unless their travelling-expenses were made good,—though it must be confessed, in cricket for example, that the payment of expenses has not always been restricted to the mere cost of travelling or of board. The danger in making these drastic laws is that games may become the exclusive privilege of the rich, a worse result than the occasional presence of even a professional amateur. But this is a wider question. The point of immediate importance is that the Americans are alive to the danger of professionalism and are taking characteristically rigorous steps to prevent it. With this as a beginning we may hope that those subtler, but not less perilous, offences against the pure sporting spirit will also be in time eliminated. The knowledge of how to play the game is not the least valuable of national possessions.

FOR THE HONOUR OF THE CORPS.

"LET 'em all come!" said the hospital-orderly despairingly. "Another pack of blooming doolies, and the first batch not 'alf fixed yet! Gawd 'elp us!"

A long slow line of stretchers trickled into the field-hospital. Here and there a face, very white and set, was seen for a minute or two, the teeth gnawing at the under lip to stifle vain cries, or an arm was thrown aloft to drop back again with limp impotence. From some of the canvas troughs a little blood dripped reluctantly, or spread in wide discoloured patches. Now and again an accidental jolt would knock a scream from the occupant of one of the doolies, or the insistent moaning of an unconscious sufferer would be heard, regular as a heart-beat, and inexpressibly fretting to the nerves of the stricken folk who lay around.

A gaunt man, with haggard eyes and deep hollows in his colourless cheeks, raised himself on his elbow from the camp-bed on which he lay, and panted questions to all who passed him.

"How's it going?" he asked again and again, gasping between each eddying gust of words. "Are our fellows holding their own? For God's sake tell me how it's going? Tell me—" He fell back exhausted.

A young soldier, with his right arm in a sling, walked down the ward from the end where the doctors were toiling like men possessed by devils. The sick officer on the bed called to him. "Here," he gasped, his face working with the intensity of his excitement. "Here, I say, come

here, you,—you man of B Company,—come here!"

The private turned and stared at the speaker. Then he walked to the foot of the bed, attempted to lift his injured arm in salute, and emitted a gruff cry, while his face contracted with pain.

"I can't salute, sir," he said. "My harm's smashed like, and they 'aven't time to look to it yet, but Gawd Almighty, anythink is better than the 'ell our chaps is gettin' of up on the 'ill yonder. It won't take long afore their name is Walker. They're getting 'ell, sir, 'ell with red pepper to it." His eyes were wild with fear of the death upon which they had looked so recently; his dominant sensation was one of relief that he had escaped from that unspeakable inferno on the summit of the hill where what remained of his regiment still clung to the bullet-smitten earth. The excitement which held him, and was increased by the fever of his undressed wound, made him careless of his words even though he spoke to one of his own officers.

"Damn you, sir!" cried the sick man, springing up in his cot, and shaking a palsied hand at the private. "How dare you speak like that of the Blankshires, how dare you?" He raved and gesticulated as though only the lack of strength restrained him from tearing the life out of the soldier before him.

"I don't want for to say nothink agin the corpse, sir," said the latter sulkily, involuntarily retreating as he spoke from the neighbourhood of the angry officer. "You

'aven't seen what I seed, sir. You 'aven't been in 'ell, not like me. My Gawd, it was hawful, hawful! They're being picked hoff like rabbits. They can't stand it, 'taint in 'uman natur. *Hi* wouldn't say but what they was right if they do bunk it. Gorramercy! you don't know what it was, sir."

The officer fell back on his cot, utterly exhausted. The private, eyeing him as men eye a dangerous animal, sidled off on his way down the ward.

Major Thoms of the Blankshire Regiment, who had been incapacitated from leading his men by a severe attack of dysentery, lay panting feebly while his mind raced. He had learned that the corps, which had been the only home that he had known for twenty years, had formed part of a column which had seized a hill in the very heart of the Boer lines before dawn that morning. Soon after day-break, when the fog had rolled away, their presence had been greeted by the crackle of rifle-fire, furious, continuous, and increasing in volume, punctuated at short intervals by the louder reports of big guns and the sobbing of the pom-poms. From a mile or two to the rear of the field-hospital the British guns roared a response, but the tumult around the hill-top yonder had not been even temporarily checked. All this Thoms knew, and the never-failing stream of shattered men that flowed past him, that blocked the doorways, that flooded into pools of wounded without the tents, told him the rest. The column, clinging despairingly to the hill-top, was being mowed down by a converging fire. But to Major Thoms the column represented only the Blankshires, and the Blankshires were to him everything that mattered,—that he cared for. He writhed as his thoughts tortured him,

and his accursed weakness nailed him to the cot. The private had spoken of the regiment as shaken, broken, perhaps, ready to run or at least surrender. The bare notion of such a thing happening to his fellows, the men whom he had bred and trained, turned him sick with horror. He sat erect, and threw his thin legs over the side of his cot. He leaned a little of his weight upon his feet, tentatively, enquiringly, and his face wore the expression of an over-anxious experimenter.

"I must," he said to himself, and held his breath for a mighty effort. He had not tried to stand erect for days, but now he staggered to his feet, though his legs felt as weak as pen-holders, and his shin-bones ached maddeningly. He stood for a moment or two, holding to the side of his bed for support. His head swam dizzily, and the world went out before his eyes in a film of grey mist, but he clung on resolutely. It seemed to him that he was standing there in a murky darkness, utterly isolated from all created things, while he fought manfully against superhuman forces for life, for all that life held worth the having,—for the right to rejoin his regiment.

Slowly but surely the mist eddied away, and the string of laden bearers still passed on up the ward. Everyone was engrossed by the labour or the pain of the moment; nobody noticed the sick man groping his way towards the nearest exit. He went as he was, bare-footed and in his pyjamas, clinging first to one cot and then to another, and more than once he grasped the arm or the shoulder of a dooly-bearer, who threw him off roughly without even sparing him a look. Thus, after what seemed an incredibly long space of time, he won clear of the tent, wormed his way through the throng of whole and

wounded men without, and crawled into some low scrub twenty yards distant from the door through which he had emerged. Here for a space he lost consciousness.

"Major Thoms is missing from 'is cot, sir," reported a hospital-orderly saluting stiffly.

"How do you mean missing?" asked the doctor to whom he spoke, never raising his eyes from the mangled limb upon which he was operating.

"He ain't in his cot, sir," said the orderly.

"Well, we can't spare the time to look for him now. Bear it in mind when we have got through the pressing cases, if we ever do, and report to me again."

A gaunt face, with two hectic patches of colour burning like sullen embers in the deep hollows of the cheeks, reared itself out of the scrub, and looked with the eyes of a maniac at the hill-top whence the roar of battle came. Before those eyes there lay a long slope, covered with rust-coloured grass or mean scrub, and spattered with boulders. Here and there the slope was broken by facets of earth or rock bare of vegetation, grey, brown, or almost black. Rising abruptly from the further extremity of this long hill, and standing out prominently from the range to which it belonged, was a bold bluff whose sides had a steeper grade and appeared in many places to be almost perpendicular. On the crest of this tiny clouds of white smoke were visible like snowy soap-bubbles forming and vanishing with extraordinary rapidity. It was to this point that Major Thoms's eyes were glued; it was towards this that he began to crawl slowly; it was here that his heart was fixed, upon this that it was set so firmly that it seemed to have flown ahead of him, and was now dragging

his frail body after it with an overpowering force.

Once safe from the observation of those within the hospital, Thoms rose to his feet and staggered unsteadily up the long slope. His strength had to some extent returned to him, but in truth it was only the soul within the man that pushed him forward. His body was a thing of infinite weight, ponderous, awkward, yet so light that it took but the swish of a grass-blade to knock it off its feet. He was conscious of numbed pain, of aching in every limb that annoyed him vaguely, much as a disturbing noise repeated often annoys a sleepy man. He knew that he was fighting desperately with some unseen influence, with outraged nature; he knew that his breath was tearing through his lungs, bursting from his lips in gusts that were agonising; that his sight was dim, that sounds came to him as from an impossible distance; that he was light-headed, that he raved and gesticulated as he struggled onward. But all the while he was perfectly aware of what he was doing. Never for an instant did he lose sight of the object of all this furious effort; never once did the desire to rejoin his men weaken or fade. The strain, the weary toiling, the agony, the supreme physical exertion, all were things realised, felt, noted with a sort of wonder, yet they were to him for the moment only worthy of consideration because they held him back, impeded him, postponed the fulfilment of his purpose. It never so much as occurred to him that such sufferings could defeat his design, that he could surrender to them. They, and the thought which he spared to them, were only, as it were, a dull background against which the idea that dominated his mind stood out in bold relief. This was the notion that he, Ralph Thoms, was the one man in

the world in whom the rank and file of the Blankshires believed intensely, that he above all others would have the power to rally them, to keep them steady, if,—if he could only get to them quick enough! He saw a vision, as vivid as though it had in truth presented itself to his eyes, of his men,—*his* men—decimated, wounded, maimed, mangled, killed, stricken down in heaps, and of their fellows, mad—afraid as the young private in the hospital had been, shirking and skulking, ready for flight or for surrender. The thought of such an awful culmination to the punishment which the regiment was receiving, to the agony it was enduring (the memory of which hurt Thoms worse than any mere physical pang could do), drove him forward relentlessly. The honour of the corps must be saved, disaster must be averted, no matter what the cost. And so, tripping and staggering, stumbling headlong, crawling on all fours, rising to run unsteadily to fall once more, Major Thoms of the Blankshires wrestled his way in sore travail towards the hill-top.

Often as he went he was forced to hide, lying panting in the grass, while doolies and their bearers trailed past him. Now and again, as he began to creep up the stiffer ascent and to draw nearer to the scene of conflict, he saw stragglers from many regiments limping painfully to the rear. Some walked with an arm hanging useless, some were helped along by uninjured men who had seized the opportunity of getting out of the death-trap above; and once a corporal, who had been overlooked by the bearers, crawled by dragging his legs after him, his face uplifted and tense with agony, while blood from a bullet-wound through his cheeks poured on to his breast so that the front of his tunic was blackened. Once Thoms saw three

men of his own regiment hurry down the hill, their helmets gone, their rifles thrown aside, their eyes fixed upon the path, their shoulders hunched as though in expectation of a blow, their lips mumbling nonsense as they fled stunned and dazed from the carnage which they dared face no longer. It was all Thoms could do to restrain himself from ordering these fugitives to rejoin the firing-line, but he was afraid that they might combine to carry him off to hospital again, and he feared to show himself.

The grade was very steep now, and the hill-side was strewn with big boulders, rock piled on rock, over which the sick man crawled laboriously with pants and groans. His feet and knees were cut and covered with blood; the sweat was pouring from his body; his hands gripped convulsively at everything within their reach; his teeth were set fast as a vice; his eyes were fixed, desperate, brimful of the agony born of the unnatural effort. With a series of dogged spurts he climbed and climbed till strength failed him, when he would lie motionless to recover force for another spasm of exertion. It seemed to him that, as in some awful nightmare, he was propelling a vast dead weight up an endless staircase. A tag of old heroic verse rang in his head, keeping time to the sledge-hammer beatings of his heart, to the fury of his labour.

With many a weary step, and many
a groan,
Up a high hill he heaves a huge round
stone;
The huge round stone, resulting with
a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes
along the ground.

The printed page on which he had read it, during the days when he was studying Johnson's *LIVES OF THE*

POETS for his examination for the Service, rose up before his eyes. He remembered the exact spot, near the top on the right hand side, which the quotation had occupied, and the incongruity of such learning as a preparation for the struggle that was being fought upon the hill-top struck him as vaguely humorous. The words came to him again and again, punctuated by his sobbing gasps for breath. The line seemed to have become entangled with his thoughts, his hopes, his fierce battle with exhaustion and pain, with the very essence of his being: The words maddened him, torturing his mind with their persistent repetitions; they added to his sufferings and to his labour, yet they would not be still.

Two or three centuries crawled past after this, — centuries packed with pain, made ghastly by frenzied efforts which attained to but a moiety of the object for which he struggled, centuries during which he wrestled against all created things blindly, breathlessly, fiercely, — against the craggy boulders which were endowed with a strange power to bruise and smite him, against the steep ascent, against the oppression of his pumping lungs, against the dizzy swimming of his head, against his mind which broke loose from all control and ran hither and thither in mazes of inconsequence exhausting him by its wanderings, against the very atmosphere around him which weighed upon him with an awful heaviness, against Nature and against himself. Then, almost suddenly, the lip of the tableland above him showed very near. Below it reserves were massed. The men, lying on their faces, and resting their chins upon their folded arms, were silent, or spoke only in short jerky sentences. Some among them were quivering from head to heel like terriers, a few were seemingly asleep,

some were dazed and bewildered, some were sunk in a stupid stolidity, some were grimly alert. From time to time, as the word was passed back from the firing-line, and a sharp order was given, little bodies of these men sprang to their feet, and doubled in a thin spray over the hill-crest, vanishing into the unseen battle beyond. Those left behind grunted, and elbowing their neighbours, edged towards the places which had been occupied by the men who had disappeared. Whatever the attitudes, whatever the appearance of these waiting soldiers, whether they lay still, whether they crawled and jostled clumsily, whether they quivered with excitement, or seemed immovable as the dead, they all were a prey to the same emotions, — expectation, suspense, dread of what lay before them. If you could have looked into their minds you would have found that this period of waiting and inactivity, although they lay in safety, was more appalling to them than any battle could be. In the grip of a hard-fought action men are busy, are so occupied in doing the thing which lies to their hands, that little time is left for thought; but now, their imaginations were running free, were conjuring up pictures of the horrors hidden by the ridge above, were forecasting risks, and milking the manhood out of them drop by drop.

From over the crest, beyond which the little waves of reinforcements had vanished, there crawled a ghastly company. They came slowly, creeping, writhing or limping, — mangled creatures with wild eyes glaring out of ashy, blood-flecked faces, faces drawn with pain. Here was a man with a shattered jaw, his chin hanging loosely on his breast, his silent mouth wide open as though he shouted; there a tortured wretch rolled over and over in his agony

calling upon his friends by name, and upon the God who made him to strike him dead, to put him out of his misery; here a man walked nursing an injured arm, which he examined curiously, as though it were some unusual object upon which he had lighted by chance; there another dragged paralysed legs behind him, and propelled himself forward by his arms with slow effort; another halted every few paces to retch and vomit violently and with much noise. One man, running at the extremity of his speed, topped the hill suddenly, and pitched headlong into the reserve. He was lashing out with arms and legs, and foaming at the mouth in strong convulsions. He had neither bruise nor scratch upon him, but his mind had given way under the terrible strain which all were sharing on the bullet-swept table-land yonder. And still the word came back with monotonous regularity, "Reinforce the right!" "Reinforce the left!" and still the little sprays of men, their rifles trailed, their bodies bent double, sprang forward to join the fighting-line.

No one took any note of Thoms, for all were too entirely engrossed by the emotions of the moment to spare a thought or a look for anything save the ridge ahead of them. The sick officer crept on steadily, till he was abreast of the front line of reserves. Then he lay flat for a space, recovering his breath, and gathering his forces for a final effort. The hill-crest which lay so near, yet so completely hid the battle, appealed to him as a thing awe-inspiring, as a vast curtain, drawn by the hand of God Himself to shroud some terrific mystery. He tried to picture to himself in imagination what the place was like that lay concealed behind that grim barrier, and in a moment his mind had conceived a scene, complete to its least

detail, and he was convinced that he saw, as in a vision, the battle-field that was hidden from his physical sight. The clamour and uproar of the fight was borne to him, and it stirred him strangely. It was as though there was something superhuman in the rattle of the musketry, the detonation of the guns, above which rose cries and shouts. He was possessed by a curious feeling that the men who fought yonder were not mere men, but beings of some separate creation, apart from their kind, beings diabolical and awful. He was pricked by an eager curiosity to see them, to see the scene of conflict, to join in this Titanic warfare, to share the emotions of the demons who waged it; but for the time he lay still, consciously husbanding his strength in preparation for a final effort. And all the while he was aware that his mind, racked by the physical strain to which his whole being had been subjected ever since he left the hospital, was playing him queer tricks, was cutting fantastic antics, was juggling with ideas which were absurd and nonsensical. He found himself watching the motions of this mind of his, as though he were completely detached from it, as though it were something apart from him, over which he exercised no sort of control; and yet the knowledge that his men were close at hand now, and were needing him sorely, never left him for a moment, and his determination to join them, to help them, to endure with and for them, never slackened.

"The Blankshires is gettin' merry 'ell," said a wounded man, as he threw himself down near the reserves, and within a yard or two of Thoms. He had a slight wound on his left elbow, enough to swear by, enough to serve him as an excuse for quitting the firing-line. "It's bloomin' 'ot heverywhere, but it's 'ottest on the right,

and the Blankshires is being punished somethink awful!"

"Reinforce the right! For Gawd's sake reinforce the right!" cried a voice from somewhere beyond the ridge, and thirty men sprang to their feet and leaped at the hill-crest like demons. Their movements were swift, but marked by a certain stiffness. They were instinct with a kind of furious determination, a hurried recklessness such as denotes an inward struggle, when a man dare not give himself time to hesitate lest he should be vanquished by his meaner self. The drawn faces of these men mirrored that feeling; they were set hard and tense; their every motion bore witness that the mind within them was driving the shuddering body forward relentlessly, against instinct, inclination, will.

Thoms, forgetful of his weakness now that the supreme moment had come, rushed forward some yards in advance of the scattered, scuttling line of crouching men. As he reached the crest he was struck with sudden astonishment, for the place was wholly unlike what he had pictured to himself. It was a broad table-land, dipping slightly in the centre to rise again at the further end where a fringe of grey boulders stood out grotesquely against the sky-line. Just beyond the dip some shallow trenches had been scratched in the hard ground, and in these lay prostrate khaki-coloured figures, stretched flat behind barking rifles. Here and there a boulder or two afforded shelter, and the men were herded behind them. On the right was another trench, equally shallow, and filled with the quick and the dead. The table-land was being played upon by big guns from the front and from the right and left flanks. The enemy's marksmen were in hiding, not only upon the slopes

of the boulder-strewn hills in front and on either hand, but behind the shelter of the rocks at the far end of the table-land itself. The whole surface of the hill-top which the British held was covered with tiny, pecking dust-flecks, that leaped upwards much as water may be seen to do when rain falls heavily upon it. Wounded men were creeping painfully towards the rear, and the dead lay about in every direction, like rabbits after a big drive. Shells burst continuously over every part of the flat.

Ralph Thoms, unarmed, bare-footed, bare-headed, and in his pyjamas, ran across the open to the trench on the right in which the Blankshires lay. He had no sense of weakness now, and his limbs served him loyally. He seized a rifle and a handful of cartridges from a dead man. He had a wide field for choice, for on the lip of the trench the dead were tumbled here, there, everywhere, some curled up like dogs, some extended as though at rest, some with peaceful, some with distorted, agonised faces.

No one spared so much as a look at Thoms as he threw himself into the firing-line. Every man was feverishly busy, shooting at those cruel boulders, for the enemy were invisible, trying to keep alive, if possible, distracted by the noise, and half maddened by the awful tension of the ordeal which all were enduring. A murderous converging fire was being brought to bear upon the shelter-trench, which in its poor two feet of depth afforded a miserable protection, and the enemy's riflemen were enfilading it from the right flank. Every minute or so a man gasped, and lay still for ever, or fell backwards with feebly kicking legs. Now and again a wounded soldier gave vent to a dull grunt, to a sharp exclamation, or to a scream of pain. A private

near Thoms threw himself flat in despair and ceased firing.

"We can't stand this 'ere," he shouted. "We've done all we blooming well can. The devils is right round us! Give in, boys, it ain't no good to be killed for nothink!"

He took a foul handkerchief from his sleeve, and began to knot it round his rifle-muzzle with feverish haste. "Stand up, boys," he shouted again. "Stand up, and 'old your 'ands above your 'eads. It'll be a surrender then, and the beggars won't 'urt us!" Following his example fully twenty men got up, and stood stiffly to attention, but with them rose Ralph Thoms, his eyes flashing, his face distorted with passion, his rifle clubbed. He brought the heavy butt down upon the head of the private who had instigated the surrender, and the man was felled like an ox, subsiding in a limp heap at the bottom of the trench.

"You dogs!" yelled Thoms, standing fearless and erect, and trembling with fury. "Lie down, and fight like men. My God! Haven't you enough pluck to stand a little punishment for the honour of the corps?"

The men were back at their duty in an instant.

"My Gawd!" ejaculated one of them in a scared whisper. "It's old Thoms's ghost, so 'elp me!"

"Come to lead the regiment, 'e 'as, now the Colonel's dead!" said another. In that appalling shambles, where the laws of God and man seemed for the time to be suspended, everything was possible and natural to the strained minds of the men, even the sudden appearance in their midst of the ghost of their grim Major.

"Stick to it, boys!" cried a sergeant, wiping the blood from his face. "Stick to it! We're right as rain now the Major has tooked charge." He looked askance at the

officer, believing firmly in his existence, but no less firmly in his ghostly nature.

The men did not stop to reason; they fought. The presence of that gaunt figure in his hospital kit filled them with a quite inconsequent feeling of security, much as a frightened child is comforted by the knowledge that some trusted elder is near to it. For the moment fear left them, and Thoms never suffered it to regain the mastery. From the instant when his men became aware he was among them, he held them as in a vice. It was he who called to them to follow him when he led the headlong rush which freed the trench from the enfilading fire of the enemy; it was he who seized the fringe of boulders behind which the murderous riflemen had lurked, and threw his men forward to hold it; it was he who nailed the Blankshires to the ground which they had won, and forced them to cling to it through the whole of that strenuous afternoon; it was he who led, directed, controlled, heartened, inspired the men of the Blankshires till the merciful darkness brought peace to the battle-rent hill; and it was the Blankshires, so men say, who saved the situation, and alone prevented the disaster which at one time was imminent.

But when the night had fallen, four privates of his regiment bore slowly to the rear an emaciated form in stained pyjamas, with feet, knees, and hands cut and bruised, with its face blackened with dirt and powder, and with limbs that hung with the limp heaviness of the dead. No wound was found upon his body; the danger which had inspired him removed, he had succumbed to sheer exhaustion, outraged nature taking its final toll in payment for his defiance of her will.

Men do deeds that live, and are rewarded by honours and decorations, by mention in despatches, and by

speedy promotion, but Ralph Thoms was destined to receive none of these things. It was only known that he had quitted his cot in hospital in the face of all regulations; that he was found dead and unhounded on the battle-field, a fate which is no more than the deserts of one who refuses to be guided by his physician, and the doctors were prepared to swear that

he could not have reached the place unaided. Therefore Major Ralph Thoms of the Blankshires was buried and forgotten, save by the men of his regiment who have their reasons for keeping silent; but perhaps to him there was guerdon enough in the fact that he, and he alone, had saved the honour of his corps.

HUGH CLIFFORD.

VICTOR HUGO.

Few men of letters have interested the public so long and by such varied means as the French poet whose centenary is commemorated this month. During a literary career longer than those of Voltaire and Goethe,—he began writing in boyhood and lived to be eighty-three—he was always able to defend himself from the trial which to a man of his temperament is insupportably painful. Now as a poet and now as a preacher, sometimes by the virulence of his hatreds and sometimes by his plea for an all-embracing compassion, he succeeded in continually attracting the attention of his world and could enjoy the knowledge that he was denounced where he was not adored. Those who were not inclined to join the procession could not refrain from throwing stones at the incense-bearers; there was no turning down a side-street.

He was born at Besançon on February 26th, 1802. His father, one of Napoleon's generals, destined him for the army but the boy had other views. At fourteen he wrote in his diary, "I mean to be Châteaubriand or nothing"; a little later he composed a romance, attempted a tragedy and started a journal, the *CONSERVATEUR LITTÉRAIRE*, and at twenty his first volume of poetry brought him a small pension from Louis the Eighteenth. Influenced perhaps by his Breton mother, and certainly by the prevailing sentiment of the hour which decreed that "he who wishes to go far and straight must follow the banner of Châteaubriand," he began as a Catholic and

a Royalist. "Leave him to Time," General Hugo is reported to have said. "The boy thinks with his mother; the man will think with me." And he was in fact not long in overtaking his father, not long in leaving him behind. The gloss of the Restoration soon grew dull: the incapacity of the Bourbons regilded the Napoleonic legend; and for a time Hugo's sympathies were Bonapartist. But the ode to the Column of the Place Vendôme, like the earlier ode on the birth of the Duke of Bordeaux, was only a stage on his road. He recognised the constitutional monarchy as a legitimate compromise between the absolute monarchy whose day was over and the reign of the people whose day was not yet come, and in 1845 Louis Philippe made him a *pair de France*. In 1848 he discovered that he was a Republican; he sat in the Assemblies of 1848 and 1850, and was anxious to become a candidate for the presidency of the Republic. The events of December, 1851, drove him into exile, and he took refuge first in Belgium and then in Guernsey. He refused to avail himself of the general amnesty offered by Louis Napoleon in 1857, and did not return to France till the fall of the Empire in 1870; his political and literary activities only ended with his death in May, 1885.

Literature in all forms tempted Hugo; and while in one he was supremely successful, he did not absolutely fail in any. Before his exile he had published four romances, among them *NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS*, half a dozen volumes of lyrics, and

nine dramas, some in prose and some in verse, beginning with *CROMWELL* which was never put on the stage, and ending with *LES BURGRAVES* which met with an unfortunate reception in 1843. Among the fruits of his years of exile are the two romances, *LES TRAVAILLEURS DE LA MER* and *LES MISÉRABLES*; the first part of his epic, *LA LÉGENDE DES SIÈCLES*; his lyrical volumes, *LES CONTEMPLATIONS*, *LES CHANSONS DES RUES ET DES BOIS*, and *LES CHÂTIMENTS*; and *WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE*. The results of his untiring energy, his capacity for incessant production, and the necessity laid upon him to maintain the conspicuous position he had secured, are at the first glance not a little formidable in their extent and variety. On closer examination the task of analysis is lighter than it seemed, so distinct are the lines which run through all Hugo's work, so well marked are its characteristics.

Victor Hugo's name is bound up with the literary revolt with which the nineteenth century opened; he represents more fully than any of his comrades in the conflict the aspirations, the triumphs, and the weakness of the romantic movement. If the issue of the struggle was not determined by any individual talent or courage, his party yet owed much of its good fortune to the daring and versatile genius of its powerful young leader. "To make an epoch," says Goethe, "two conditions are essential, a good head and a great legacy. Luther inherited the darkness of the Popes, Napoleon the French Revolution, and I the errors of the Newtonian theory." Victor Hugo was fortunate enough to share Napoleon's legacy. The pseudo-classic tradition had survived the fury of an iconoclastic age; before that venerable figure seated motionless in its Louis Quatorze chair the rude innovator had paused in re-

spectful homage; and the new century, beginning life under absolutely new conditions, found itself still in bondage to the ancient lawgiver. It was soon evident that the new ideas and the old literary formula could not be reconciled; as in the sixteenth century religious and political changes were inseparably associated, so now a literary revolt was certain to follow the political revolution. Classicism was the expression of a society whose day was done; and it outlasted it only as the clothes in which a man is buried outlast the man.

Hugo did not arrive quite in time to open his epoch: Châteaubriand and Madame de Staël were there already; and still it is his epoch. The man and the movement were made for each other, and to guess what he would have done without it is no easier than to guess what it would have done without him. The poet might have had to wait for recognition; the apostle arrested attention at once. It was not his art but his theories about art which agitated the critics; and the prefaces which heralded his plays were as eagerly studied as the plays themselves. *CROMWELL*, for instance (written in 1827), is rather a dull tragedy, but its preface has all the rhetorical vigour of a well-written manifesto; come what might to the drama, the manifesto could not be ignored.

It would be a strange thing [says the writer] if at this time of day liberty like light should be allowed to penetrate everywhere but into the region of thought which is by nature the freest of all. Let us set to work with the hammer on theories and systems. . . . There are no rules, no models; the poet must take counsel of nature, of truth, of inspiration only, he must above all be careful to copy no one.

He insists on the abandonment of the theory that art must deal only with the beautiful.

It is not for man to be wiser than God Who introduced into His creation grotesque and ugly things. Poetry must take the great, the decisive step, the step which will change the face of the whole intellectual world. Henceforth she will mingle light and shade, the grotesque and the sublime.

He goes on to explain that poetry has three ages corresponding to the three epochs of society. The primitive age was lyric, the second, the Homeric period, was epic, and the modern age, that is the Christian era, is dramatic. In his anxiety to accentuate this point, he gives us to understand that Christianity and the drama are of exactly the same age. The drama being the flower and crown of poetry, it naturally followed that the romantic party must write dramas.

From a literary point of view the decision was unjustifiable; for nowhere is the weakness of Hugo and his followers so clearly displayed as in the drama. The vital principle of the French romantic movement was individuality, the desire to express oneself without hindrance and without reserve; and since the lyric poet can hardly be too personal, too intimate, its form was naturally lyric. The law of literature demands, on the other hand, that the dramatic poet shall detach himself from himself; he is not there to reflect aloud on his own joys and sorrows but to convince us that other people are rejoicing or suffering before our eyes. When Hugo decided that the romantic poet must be a dramatist, he was less a poet than the leader of a party. The fatal rigidity of the classic rule applied chiefly to the drama, and the new spirit of independence could assert itself more emphatically here than anywhere else. Hugo's plays accordingly are challenges and protests; their spirit is all defiance. "Observe," they seem to say, "how much I

dare!" Why, for instance, is Ruy Blas presented to us in a footman's livery? Only because no classic writer would have ventured to make a footman the hero of a tragedy. It matches the assertion of the author's right to call a *cochon* a *cochon* and not, as was the classic use, a *porc*. Why is the gloomy lover of Marion Delorme a foundling? The only reason for making a hero a foundling is the pleasure of afterwards discovering him to be a prince, but poor Didier is never discovered to be anyone; he is only there to proclaim a dramatic right of way.

This negative principle was too slender to bear the weight of a drama, and Hugo supplemented it by a device of which he gives us the formula himself. "Take the most hideous moral deformity, where it stands out most plainly, in the heart of a woman, blend with this deformity the purest moral sentiment known to woman, maternal love, and you have a monster, and the monster will interest, will call forth tears," will, in fact, be Lucretia Borgia. On this antithetical principle all his plays are constructed, till we can only fall back on his own line, "Still everywhere antithesis! Well, we must be resigned." Cromwell is, in Hugo's own phrase, a Tiberius-Dandin, a terror abroad, a ridiculous idiot at home; Hernani is a brigand noble, Marion Delorme a pure-souled courtesan; in RUY BLAS a queen is in love with a valet; in LE ROI S'AMUSE frightful deformity is redeemed by paternal devotion. The law by which Hugo bound himself ends by becoming as monotonously artificial as any of Boileau's rejected rules.

In spite of Hugo's enthusiasm for Shakespeare he was only influenced by him in accidentals. Blanche in LE ROI S'AMUSE would probably never

have been sewn up in a sack if Desdemona had not first been coarsely smothered with a common pillow, and the fool in *LEAR* is possibly responsible for the fools in *CROMWELL* and *MARION DELORME*; but the essentials of Shakespearean tragedy left him untouched. The catastrophe of Hugo's plays is always arbitrarily introduced, the story seldom ends badly from the beginning. We cannot conceive Hamlet and Ophelia married and living happily ever after, or Macbeth and his wife frightened by Banquo's ghost into restitution and a placid private life; but there is no reason why the Duke in *HERNANI* should not relent at the last moment and make the lovers happy,—in fact, were we not warned that the play is a tragedy, we should fully expect it. There was nothing to prevent Marion from obtaining her lover's pardon from Louis the Thirteenth and vanishing into a convent happy in the knowledge that she has saved her Didier, except the author's resolve to make his audience miserable; and before Blanche could be brought to her sad end it was necessary that her father, who was, as a rule, agonisingly jealous of her safety, should allow the young and beautiful girl to traverse a bad quarter of Paris alone late at night; and this in the sixteenth century.

✓ All that a writer of talent, a dramatist in spite of himself, could do for his characters, Hugo did. He gave them fine lines to speak,—he could not do otherwise, great master of words that he was—and striking situations, and he taught them all the stage-tricks he knew. We have Rochester disguised as a Puritan minister, Cromwell as a soldier, Hernani as a pilgrim, Blanche as a man; King Francis passes for a clerk, Marion for a woman of good character, Ruy Blas for Don Cesar, Don Sallust for Ruy Blas. Don Carlos

saves Hernani, Hernani saves Don Carlos, the Duke saves Hernani, Don Carlos saves both Hernani and the Duke; in almost every scene someone renounces the right of killing someone else. Hernani hides in a secret cell, Don Carlos hides first in a cupboard and then in Charlemagne's tomb, to spring out unexpectedly upon the lovers and the conspirators. We are always on the border-line which divides tragedy from melodrama, and not infrequently it is crossed.

The secret of Hugo's failure as a dramatist and his half-failure as a writer of romance lies in his indifference to men and women. Things and places interested him much more than human beings; in his love-poems he constantly appears to be contemplating the trees and the turf, instead of attending to Rose or Lise; and two of his three notable romances are inspired purely by the spirit of place. In the preface to *CROMWELL* there is a sentence which indicates how early he had been seized by the passion for vitalising the inanimate.

We are beginning [he says] to understand that the exact locality is one of the first elements of reality. The place in which a catastrophe has occurred becomes a terrible inseparable witness of it; and the absence of this kind of silent personage would leave the grandest scenes of history incomplete on the stage.

The insistence upon a correct local colour was one of the familiar demands of the romantic school. They contended, very justly, that art asked something more of a Spaniard than that he should be called Rodrigo, of an Arab than that he should be called Abdullah. They were all eager to follow where Scott and Byron led the way, and Hugo's poems *LES ORIENTALES* are magnificently flooded with a light which, if it never shone

on Greece or Egypt, has all the warmth and glow which a poet dreaming of the East sees in his dream. But the presence of the silent personage here spoken of is an altogether different thing from the local colour of Hugo's contemporaries; with them it is a picturesque accessory, with him it becomes a ruling idea. His love of paradox carries him to the extreme length, and nothing is so alive in his romances as the inanimate. Already in *HERNANI* it had gained the mastery over him sufficiently to oblige him to spoil the composition of the play. The scene is laid in Saragossa and all the characters except Don Carlos are Spaniards. In the fourth act, without a word of warning, they are all without exception transported to Germany, to Aix la Chapelle, where their number is suddenly increased by an absurd troop of noble German conspirators who only appear in two short scenes and are unceremoniously marched off again. Hugo was too great an artist to make this blunder by accident; he was forced into it by something stronger than himself. There was no spot in the world so suitable for the meditations of a German emperor as the tomb of Charlemagne; only the most ignorant tourist can hurry through Aix heedless of the strange shadows that obscure those ancient walls, and for the poet the opportunity was irresistible. But even the audacious chief of the romantics shrank from transporting the imperial remains to Spain. It is not quite clear why geography is reckoned a thing so much more sacred than history, and why the writer who did not scruple to invent a Cromwell and a Charles the Fifth, a Lucretia Borgia and a Mary Tudor, should hesitate to invent a tomb of Charlemagne. Since, however, the tomb could neither be moved nor abandoned there was nothing for it but to carry all the

actors to Aix. Neither in *NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS* nor in *LES TRAVAILLEURS DE LA MER* are the men and women interesting. Esmeralda in her innocent irresponsibility is hardly a woman, her mother is a maniac, Quasimodo is a monster; they move us with a painful curiosity but with no real fellow-feeling. The soul of the book is the cathedral, the "silent inseparable witness" of the mortals who play their insignificant parts and go back to the dust whence they came. In *LES TRAVAILLEURS DE LA MER* Déruchette and her handsome young clergyman, and all the characters except Gilliatt, are dwarfed by the ocean; that great voice surging through the story makes everything else trivial. This accounts perhaps for the fact that Gilliatt says nothing till the end of the book, and then only half a dozen sentences. The author, listening intently to "the sombre word that the sea is saying," did not notice that his hero was dumb.

Victor Hugo's third notable romance,—though indeed the word romance hardly describes it—has little affinity with the others. No great artist,—and Hugo's claim to the title is beyond all question—ever made a more frank and unscrupulous bid for popular applause than is made in *LES MISÉRABLES*. Hugo did not call himself a democrat till 1848, but at heart he was never, so far as literature is concerned, anything else. In his own words, "My horizon has altered, but never my heart;" and as at six and twenty his highest ambition was to satisfy "the immense crowd greedy of the pure emotions of art which floods the theatres of Paris every evening," at sixty he was capable of ignoring every literary scruple to win the same reward. There are memorable scenes in the book; Javert offering his resignation to M. Madeleine, Cosette and the big

doll, Gavroche the young vagabond consoling the forlorn timid little brothers lost in the streets of Paris, who "followed him as they would have followed an archangel,"—these are passages which can be read again and again and never without a thrill of admiration and pity. But what a long way we have to go for them! The consummate craft, the symmetrical composition of *NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS* is replaced by eight incoherent loosely-strung volumes, wedges of irrelevant matter are driven into the joints of the story, and the rules and models on which the writer trampled so jubilantly in his youth find here a revenge, almost a vindication. It was necessary, for example, that Marius, the younger hero, should be under obligations to Thénardier, the villain. In order to bring this about the father of Marius must be wounded at Waterloo and must believe that he owes his life to Thénardier. It is not enough for the fact to be mentioned; we must observe it for ourselves. Well, says the reader, why not? An hour on the field of Waterloo can hurt no one. It is with some dismay he discovers that nineteen chapters must be devoted to Waterloo before the colonel and the camp-follower can effect a meeting.

Hugo does not attempt here, or anywhere, to show us a woman nobly planned. His women are wholly ignorant of any motive power but passion, and even passion does not endow them with ordinary intelligence, or Fantine would never have dreamed of leaving the child to whom she is passionately attached for years to the mercy of total strangers. No mother, out of Hugo's pages, could have failed to beg her way to the Thénardiens' village to see for herself once, at least, how Cosette was faring, before parting with her hair and her teeth.

But the worst fault of the book is not its artistic defect but its flagrant insincerity. It professes to be a study of the social problem, a book with a definite purpose; its absolute ignorance of the question with which it deals is amazing. The disorder and cruelty of the existing system is demonstrated and denounced by a writer who still believes in the old and somewhat discredited prescription, the reckless distribution of alms. When the bishop has provided the wretched tramp with a supper, a bed for the night, and some kindly counsel, he believes that his duty to his neighbour is done; he sees the convict depart with no provision for the future but a pair of silver candlesticks, and his conscience is void of offence. When the ex-convict is confronted with the same problem, he evades it in his turn with an unscrupulous benevolence worthy of the Middle Ages. He was a good enough man of business to make a large fortune with no experience but that of a hedger and ditcher, and no capital but industry and perseverance, and his years of penal servitude have armed him besides with an invaluable acquaintance with criminal nature; and yet he is more easily duped than we imagine the bishop would have been. The scene in which he presents his purse to the pickpocket with a sermon of two closely printed pages, and that in which he distributes bank-notes and blankets to the professional beggars in their den of vice are as profoundly, unpardonably false as the meeting between Monseigneur Bienvenu and the "Conventionnel G."

The influence of the romantic movement on the French novel and the French drama proved neither profound nor permanent. It destroyed the old dogmas, but had not the strength to replace them by any

truer canons or by any less artificial models. With regard to French poetry, its effect can hardly be overestimated, and if for the romantic movement we were to say Victor Hugo, we should hardly do an injustice to the brilliant young writers who were associated with him in *LE GLOBE*. He did not strike a sweeter or more melodious note than Lamartine, but in the undulating languors, the seductive melancholy of the *MEDITATIONS* only two or three chords are audible; they expressed a certain phase of life, a single mood. The wide range of Hugo's talent makes him the poet not of one mood but of many; his great vocabulary, his rhythmical perfection, the fresh beauty of his imagery, the colour and resonance of his language were to his contemporaries (as they are still to each new reader) a revelation of the resources of the French tongue. We find in his work no trace of the laborious search for the elaborate and unusual which is the modern substitute for the preciousness of an earlier day, no thinness disguised as delicacy, no obscurity calling itself depth; his touch is that of a master, sure and easy, handling an instrument which he perfectly understands and loves. Singularly unembarrassed by original ideas and serious convictions, his contribution to the intellectual needs of his time is explained in his own fine lines which describe his soul as a crystal reflecting every ray, as an æolian harp vibrating to every breath. There was (as M. Faguet points out in his admirable study of Hugo) hardly a popular cry between 1820 and 1850 which did not find in him its magnificent echo; and this explains his frequent variations. But if he always thought what the majority was thinking, his way of expressing it is all his own.

It is impossible to do even a mode-

rate measure of justice to Hugo in translation, because no writer is more alive than he is to the intrinsic value of words; each one has for him its own colour as well as its own sound; he has lines which dance and glitter, lines which ripple and shine. We cannot wholly miss in any language the effect of such imagery as

We mount, an army, to the assault of
Time,—

or,

And for an instant thro' the unfathomed
night
Behold the casement of eternity
Lit by a sinister ray,—

or the exquisite passage in which Ruth, gazing drowsily through half closed eyelids across the harvest-field at the crescent moon, asks herself,

What god,
What harvester of the eternal summer,
Had dropped his golden sickle care-
lessly
In the wide field of stars.

But the cleverest translator can do nothing with such a rhythmic masterpiece as *AU PEUPLE*:

Partout pleurs, sanglots, cris funèbres;
Pourquoi dors-tu dans les ténèbres?
Je ne veux pas que tu sois mort. . .
O dormeur sombre, entends les fleuves
Murmurer teints de sang vermeil. . .

The low disquieting vibration quickening and rising from line to line till it breaks in the piercing cry of the close, "Lazare! Lazare!" depends chiefly on the choice of vowel-sounds. Sleep and death have no equivalent for the sonorous *o* which reverberates through the poem.

Towards Nature Hugo has two attitudes. He was a fine and careful observer,—witness the lines,

As in a silent wood we are aware
Of wings beneath the leaves—

and his Norman landscapes are painted with sympathy and truth. But he was not the loyal lover he constantly protests himself; the "sounding cataract" never "haunted him like a passion," and there are odious moments when he is more of a Parisian than a poet, as when he fancies that torn-up *billets-doux* turn into white butterflies, or when he thinks it pretty to picture the lily and the violet engaged in the furtive indecencies of which human beings are ashamed. He had a most unusual power of seeing and remembering details, but the beauty and significance of things as they are did not appeal to him very forcibly; his strong and vivid imagination was always at work, sometimes with rather grotesque results. In his poem on the Jardin des Plantes, he watches the children gazing at the caged animals and sees at once an effective contrast. But an ordinary panther or lion is not a sufficient foil for the roseate prettiness of the children, who, like all Hugo's children, are fairhaired little angels. In a moment his swift imagination has transformed the depressed creatures behind the bars into hideous monsters, the dreadful offspring of trackless deserts, and presently they are not really animals at all but the fearful sepulchres of the lost souls of some forgotten age, filling the air with inarticulate cries for deliverance. While the children are considering the familiar tiger and the rather disappointingly small lion in the decorous surroundings of the Zoological Garden, the horror-struck poet is contemplating an outpost of hell. The aspect of Nature which really impresses Hugo is the hostile aspect. In his heart he knows her to be not the smiling nymph of his pretty verses, but the dark tool of the vague inimical force which spies upon man

in the darkness and dogs his steps across the waste:

Space knows and looks and listens. In
the dark
Are watchful eyes, and ears beneath
our graves.

He believes in "a sort of implacable horror which envelopes the universe." "The forests are afraid;" the stars are "spectral worlds dragging unequal chains;" in the falling snow he sees Death "shake her pale wings across the night;" and the guilty sea "kiss the dark reef, her fierce accomplice." Here, as in his poems on death, there is an accent of sincerity which we too often miss elsewhere. His form is almost always beautiful, but it is seldom, except when he writes on death, that it becomes secondary to the emotion which penetrates and spiritualises it. Sometimes it is the horror of the grave which seizes him,—

The terror of the shadowy road
Haunted by troops of spectral doubts,

when the dying know "the worm reality, the world a dream," and the dead man hears the four planks of his coffin talking and perceives himself "vanquished, the helpless prey of things." Sometimes he dwells on man, the enigma, who feels

About his feet the earthworm crawl,
And on his brow the kiss of God;

and sometimes on the pitiful transience of mortal endeavour:

What dost thou, Wind, with all the
faded grasses?
What dost thou, Wind, with all the
fallen leaves?
With all that laughs and unremembered
passes,
With all that grieves?

But he constantly turns for consolation to the faith in the future life created by his robust optimism, which is the radiant inspiration of the lovely poem *LA MISE EN LIBERTÉ*. The only bird in the aviary being disconsolate without a companion, he determines to set it free. The bird sees a huge hand thrust into the cage and flutters here and there in an agony of terror, till seized by an irresistible force it lies drooping and faint in its captor's hand. In another instant it is soaring in joyous rapture to meet its companions in the summer woods. The poet watching it grows pensive. "I have been Death," he says to himself; and the phrase is an illumination.

Victor Hugo's countrymen are not quite agreed as to whether he is greatest as a lyric or as an epic poet, and where distinguished French critics differ, it would very ill become a foreigner to offer a dogmatic opinion. It may, however, be suggested that outside his own country he will be remembered for his lyrics. He drifted towards the epic by degrees; we can trace the steps which lead through his plays,—*LES BURGRAVES* is more epic than drama,—through his romances,—the conflict between Gilliatt and his great adversary the sea is more epic than romance,—and through some of his lyrics to *LA LÉGENDE DES SIÈCLES*. The legend is an attempt to trace the progress of humanity, man's movement towards the light; it aims at painting humanity "successively and simultaneously under all its aspects, history, fable, philosophy, religion, science," at giving "impressions of the human profile from Eve, mother of men, to the Revolution, mother of peoples." Hugo displays here to the full those striking qualities which have already been recognised; some of the episodes of which the legend is composed are

marvels of style and rhythm, of colour and music; and to these must be added the narrator's gift, the power of telling a story broadly and boldly. But he was hindered in the execution of his colossal design as a whole by two fundamental defects,—his indifference to all that is Hellenic, his ignorance of all that is Christian. Hugo was not scholar enough to appreciate the gravity of these omissions, and readers of the legend will do well to shut their eyes to them, and take what is given them, not perhaps quite seriously as a history of humanity or a philosophic system, but as a series of great word-pictures, enchanting or terrible as the narrator pleases. This applies to the first part; the second and third are less alluring. The poet's love of the gigantic, the abnormal, is seen growing into a possession, and even his wonderful vocabulary is strained to describe the sombre immensities of time and space through which he carries us, the prodigious tyrannies and retributions we are invited to witness. We admit it is wonderful and that no one but Hugo could have done it; and then we gratefully exchange the thunderous gloom of his apocalyptic visions for the translucent beauty of such a poem as *A VILLEQUIER*. The temptation to quote from it is irresistible, but here again translation would be an act of idle cruelty.

Je viens à vous, Seigneur, père auquel
il faut croire,

Je vous porte apaisé
Les morceaux de ce cœur plein de
votre gloire
Que vous avez brisé.

Je ne résiste plus à tout ce que m'arrive,

Par votre volonté;
L'âme de deuils en deuils, l'homme de
rive en rive
Roule à l'éternité.

Je dis que le tombeau qui sur les morts
se ferme,
Ouvre le firmament ;
Et que ce qu' ici-bas nous prenons
pour le terme
Est le commencement.

Les mois, les jours, les flots des mers,
les yeux qui pleurent
Passent sous le ciel bleu ;
Il faut que l'herbe pousse et que les
enfants meurent ;
Je le sais, ô mon Dieu.

It is not easy to find a parallel to

the tragic unfaltering simplicity of these lines, in which the soul, crushed and blinded by the agony of bereavement, awakes from the madness of revolt to accept the Supreme Will. The Hugo of Heine's caustic comment, "So flaming without, so glacial within," has disappeared, and in his place we have the greatest of French lyric poets, one of the great lyric poets of the world.

H. C. MACDOWALL

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THE CLOSE OF A GREAT WAR.

(A PARALLEL AND A LESSON.)

IN the spring of the year 1784 there returned to England from America the remains of a British army, angry, dispirited, and above all thoughtful. To say that it was a beaten army would be untrue, for though it had suffered many defeats, two of them veritable disasters, it had given harder blows than it had received. Against Saratoga and Yorktown the British could set successes quite as important in the captures of New York, with the forts around it, and of Charleston; while the American invasion of Canada, though at first crowned with some little success, had issued finally in abject and extremely costly failure. There was also a certain attack upon a tiny British garrison at Penobscot, about which Englishmen know nothing and Americans say as little as possible, but which, if critically examined, will be found to have been as crushing and humiliating a defeat as was inflicted upon the enemy during the whole of the war. Moreover, in spite of French subsidies, French troops, and French fleets in and about America, in spite of the active hostility of Spain and Holland and the "armed neutrality" of Europe against England, in spite actually of the disaster at Yorktown itself, it is perfectly clear that the revolted colonies

could not have carried on the war for another year, while the Old Country, hard pressed though she was, had still the strength in reserve for a final effort which could hardly have failed of success.

Still, though unbeaten, the army was thoughtful, for it had passed through many hard trials and learned many bitter lessons. The march to and from Lexington was the first of these lessons, when a small British column was riddled by sniping¹ fire in front, flanks, and rear from every point of vantage along twenty miles of road. The frontal attack upon the entrenchments of Bunker's Hill was the second lesson, when eighty British officers, conspicuous by their shining gorgets, were shot down by the unerring rifles of the American marksmen, and the position was only carried at the third attempt with a loss of over eleven hundred out of a total force of twenty-two hundred men. There were no more frontal attacks upon entrenched positions after this, and there was only one more expedition upon the model of Lexington, which, having met with the like fate, brought such adventures peremptorily

¹ This is not a word of modern invention. I have traced its use back to the siege of Baroach, in the Bombay Presidency, in 1772.

to an end. The British generals realised that they had been set down to the most difficult of all tasks, the subduction of a civilised people in a savage country,—of a people, too, trained in the school of sport and of Indian warfare, unfettered by military rules or pedantries, and, it must be added, not over scrupulous as to the abuse of the customs of war.

It is true that the Americans formed a considerable number of regular regiments, chiefly infantry, and that they fought a certain number of pitched battles on a certain scale of magnitude. But on these occasions, though they chose their positions very cleverly, they were practically always out-manceuvred and out-fought, even when they were not out-numbered. Wide turning movements; conceived with great skill and executed with admirable precision, won the actions of Brooklyn and Brandywine; and, speaking generally, it may be said that the Americans rarely, if ever, got the better of the British except in irregular warfare. Their natural shrewdness, however, soon showed them that irregular tactics were best adapted to a wild and thinly populated country, and they accordingly pursued them with much success. By such tactics, and no other, was Burgoyne reduced to capitulation. No more splendid attempt to achieve the impossible is recorded in our military history than that of Burgoyne and his heroic seven thousand; but it was less the drilled and trained American platoons than the cunning marksmen which thinned his ranks. His campaign may be described as one of bush-fighting, for, except for an occasional small clearing, his route lay through almost interminable forest; and whether on march, in action, or in camp his men were continually falling under the bullets of some enemy safely concealed

among the trees. Drill and discipline could make the British soldier stand in his ranks and be killed; but they could not silence the unseen rifle which, safe beyond the range of his own musket, struck down first his officers, then his serjeants, and at last himself.

The British, therefore, had no alternative but to learn from their enemies, to pit marksman against marksman, individual against individual, irregular tactics against irregular tactics. Sundry irregular corps were therefore formed, sometimes of a composite kind so as to include mounted men, unmounted men, and gunners, in order that the Americans might be beaten with their own weapons. Simcoe, Tarleton, and Ferguson were the most famous of their leaders, Ferguson being a passionate devotee of the rifle and the finest marksman in England. He, poor fellow, was killed before he could write any account of his actions; but Tarleton and Simcoe have each left behind them a volume, with full descriptions of long night-marches, surrounding of farms, surprises of posts, and the like, which resemble curiously the accounts that we have read in the newspapers during the past twelve months. Tarleton, in particular, was famous for the speed and distance of his marches; and it may be questioned whether, as the phrase goes, his records have been beaten in South Africa. It is noticeable that, except under these leaders, mounted troops were little employed during the American war. The whole of the regular cavalry sent from England across the Atlantic did not exceed two weak regiments of Light Dragoons, one of which was withdrawn after two years. The general actions of the war were fought almost without exception on ground so densely

wooded that no large number of cavalry could come into action unless dismounted; and it must be remembered that the Light Dragoon of those days was armed with musket and bayonet as well as with sabre.

For several months Simcoe and Tarleton did good work in New York and New Jersey until the principal scene of action was shifted to Carolina. There it may be said that, after the capture of Charleston, the operations were carried on wholly by irregular or, as it was then called, partisan-warfare. The problem set to Lord Cornwallis, who was in command, was one that is not unfamiliar to us. Starting from a base on the sea he was to advance inland for two or three hundred miles through a population in which the disloyal party had gained the upper hand, reducing it to loyalty and obedience as he went. The principal settlements lay on the banks of the great rivers which seamed the province from end to end, and the roads naturally followed these waterways. Cornwallis, therefore, advanced up the largest of these rivers, receiving oaths of allegiance, distributing arms to the takers of those oaths, and establishing posts to maintain his lines of communication. Then the well-known game began. Oaths were thrown to the winds, and the distributed arms turned against their donors. General Greene, a very fine soldier, with a small nucleus of regular troops kept retreating before Cornwallis in front, while Sumpter, Marion, and other guerilla leaders, the De Wets and Delareys of their day, worked round his flanks and rear, attacked his posts, snapped up his patrols, intercepted his supplies, and, in a word, made his life a burden and his advance a danger. To Tarleton and Ferguson

bands, and very capable leaders they proved themselves to be. But though they were often brilliantly successful, they suffered also very severe defeats. Tarleton on one occasion lost practically the whole of his column, and escaped only with a few dragoons, while Ferguson suffered the same misfortune and was left dead on the field. Like all leaders in that peculiar description of warfare they ran great risks, and were therefore liable to great reverses.

But in the course of all these irregular actions the British troops had inevitably learned irregular ways. The stately solid order which had done such wonders at Fontenoy, at Minden, and at Quebec had vanished. The depth of three ranks, which had hitherto been the rule, had been reduced to two; the files had been opened, and the formation of the line had become (relatively speaking) loose, disjointed, and irregular. Companies were separated by wide intervals, and there was an independence of action among small units which was wholly at variance with current European notions. This looseness of array, originally brought about by constant bush-fighting and by the deadly fire of the American sharpshooters, had been encouraged by the comparative absence of regular cavalry on either side. More than once, it is true, a mere handful of one or two hundred sabres had decided an action in favour of one side or the other; and the American Colonel Washington, a kinsman of the great George, had shown conspicuous ability in the handling of this particular arm. Moreover both Tarleton and another British officer had found to their cost that the attack of their open irregular line upon steady troops in solid formation could sometimes issue in disaster. None the less the British officers returned from America with the fixed

idea that the fire-arm, whether musket or rifle, was all in all in modern warfare, that the shock of the bayonet was so rare as to be practically obsolete, and that, as a natural consequence, the greater the frontage of fire that could be developed the better. They urged therefore that the third rank should be abolished, since its fire, if not positively dangerous to the first and second ranks, was ineffective; that the musket, hitherto made long so as to serve for use in three ranks, should be shortened, and that the weight thus saved should be utilised in enlarging its bore; and that the files should be loose, or in other words, that the lateral interval between man and man should be wide, so as to give to every individual greater freedom of action.

Such were the thoughts of this thoughtful army. There were, however, officers at headquarters who, though they had fought under Ferdinand of Brunswick from 1759 to 1762, had not gone to America, and while not denying that much was to be learned from recent campaigns, could not accept so complete an overthrow of all received opinions. Among them was one Colonel David Dundas, who had attended the manœuvres of the Prussian army very regularly during those years. He was a lean, dry, crabbed Scot who as a youth had walked all the way from Edinburgh to Woolwich to obtain the post of "lieutenant fire-worker" in the Royal Artillery; but he was the fortunate possessor of brains and he was an enthusiast in his profession. He went to Prussia again in 1785, and saw three thousand cavalry advance at the trot in column of squadrons and deploy into line for attack over a frontage of a mile in less than three minutes; he saw the Prussian infantry also manœuvre, in flexible columns and deploy by battalions and

brigades with beautiful accuracy and precision on their given alignment, solid and steady, three ranks deep; and he asked himself whether a British army, trained on the principles imported from America, could meet such troops with success. He answered himself in the negative; and then, reflecting on the laxity of all military rules at that time in England,—that every colonel did very much what was right in his own eyes, and that, whatever the zeal and intelligence of individual commanders, the peace-establishment of a regiment was too weak for them either to gain or to impart good instruction, he resolved to throw all his weight counter to the American scale lest irregularity should become "regulation."

Other officers at headquarters were as keen as this Scottish colonel, and the result was the publication of a very ponderous quarto volume, *PRINCIPLES OF MILITARY MOVEMENTS*, dedicated to the King by His Majesty's dutiful servant and subject David Dundas. The new system was tried experimentally at Dublin, while the Adjutant-General (there was no Commander-in-Chief) made it his business to secure the blessing of the Duke of York and the Brigade of Guards, without which no such reforms could prosper. The *PRINCIPLES*, which were based entirely on the Prussian practice, were duly accepted, and for the first time the British Army was subjected to absolute uniformity of training. That the manœuvring power of British troops was much increased thereby there can be no doubt; but it is also unquestionable that reaction was carried too far in Dundas's reforms. The truth was, as Cornwallis noticed in 1785, that parts of the Prussian training, even when carried on under the great Frederick's own eye, were thoroughly unpractical. The rigidity

and formality of Dundas's system gained for him the name of Old Pivot; and the eighteen manœuvres into which he had distributed the whole science of military evolution were a sad stumbling-block to slow-witted officers. "General," said Sir John Moore to him in 1804, "that book of yours has done a great deal of good, and would be of great value if it were not for those damned eighteen manœuvres." "Why,—aye," answered Dundas slowly, in broad Scotch "blockheads don't understand;" and he is not the last framer of drill-books who has made that remark. Moore himself in those same years was selecting the best points of Dundas's book and of American experience for the training of the Light Division; and it is significant that he restored the formation in two ranks and the independence of small units, in the teeth of Dundas and of all the nations in Europe.

It may be asked why I have thought it worth while to disinter these dry bones of ancient military controversy. I answer, because there seems to me to be danger lest we should fall into errors analogous to those from which Dundas saved the army in 1788. A great change has passed over all warfare in the century since Moore drilled his famous division at Shorncliffe, and yet men say now just what they said at the close of the American war, that the fire-arm or, as we now express it, the rifle, is everything. They then averred that the shock of the bayonet was obsolete; they now declare that lances and sabres have no place but in a museum, and that the shock-action of cavalry is a thing of the past. There is a parallel even in the matter of formation for attack. Our infantry has been extended in the present war to intervals of thirty paces between man and man; will it be prudent to

employ as great extension against a European enemy? We are sadly in want of a Dundas to remind us that Boers are not our only possible foes nor South Africa our only possible fighting ground, and of a Moore to assimilate for us all that is best in the teaching of foreign armies as well as of South African experience.

So much for purely military and technical matters; let us now glance at our military administration and our military policy in the broader sense at this same period. The Treaty of Versailles which ended the war was negotiated by Lord Shelburne; and almost the last act of his Administration was to ordain that all soldiers enlisted for three years' service,—that is to say the vast majority of the men then in the ranks—might take their discharge at once, whether they had completed their terms or not. Having done this, Shelburne was almost immediately driven from office by the coalition of Fox and Lord North. This Administration, knowing that nothing but success could cover the iniquity of its origin, set itself to gain popular favour by an excessive reduction of the army. At the peace of 1763 the 70th Regiment of the Line and the 18th Dragoons were the youngest that had been kept on the Army-list; but Fox and North, although affairs had long been going very ill with us in India, proposed to disband all regiments junior to the 63rd in the infantry and to the 16th Dragoons in the cavalry. Fortunately on the accession of Lord Rockingham's Government General Conway had been appointed Commander-in-Chief; and he, though generally speaking a feeble creature, combated this mischievous design with great courage and resolution. The struggle between the soldier and the politicians was long and strenuous, but the soldier

triumphed at last, and it was as well. By November, 1783, the infantry of the Line in England had sunk to three thousand men; if North and Fox had executed their intention there would have been only twenty-six hundred in the whole of Great Britain.

Very fortunately this unprincipled pair were shortly afterwards removed from office, and William Pitt came into power in May, 1784, with a majority which made him ruler of England for the next seventeen years. Mr. Bagehot has written that there were at that moment three questions which pressed for the attention of a great statesman,—Ireland, economical reform, and parliamentary reform—and that Pitt dealt with all three of them. The reader shall presently judge whether there were not a fourth question also, little less urgent than the others. All authorities seem to agree that Pitt was a great financier (and indeed there is very much to support his claim to the title) and also that he was born to be a great peace-minister. We all know what a great peace-minister in England is; he is a man who curtails the votes for the Army and Navy, leaves all the means of defence to go to wrack and ruin, and then boasts of the reduction of expenditure and of the prosperous state of the country. It is worth while for us to examine whether or not Pitt was a minister of this description, freely granting first that he found the burden of the public debt increased to alarming proportions and the national finances in hideous disorder.

First, be it noted to Pitt's honour that one of his earliest cares was to secure the dockyards of Portsmouth and Plymouth by fortification; for Plymouth had been exposed to imminent danger when the French and Spaniards commanded the Channel in

1779, and had indeed owed its deliverance rather to the enemy's timidity than to any strength of its own. In this admirable design, however, he was foiled by faction and prejudice in the House of Commons. In vain Lord Hood and several captains in the Navy pleaded that fortification of the dockyards was essential if the British fleet was to do its duty at sea. The Opposition professed constitutional scruples. One gentleman opined that "fortifications might be termed seminaries of soldiers and universities of prætorianism." Sheridan, with his usual impudence, argued the question as though he had been an admiral. Fox, who was ready enough to plead for the divine right of princes when he saw a chance of gaining office thereby, declared "that on constitutional measures he retained his great party principles;" and the motion was actually lost by the Speaker's casting vote. None the less Pitt contrived within the next few years to fortify at any rate the naval stations in the West Indies, and even to add a small corps of artificers to the Royal Engineers for the work. The subjection of these artificers to military law again drove Fox and Sheridan into hysterics, and Fox averred that the measure "must operate to the surrender of our liberties." Let no man depreciate the value of printed Parliamentary debates; they are the chart which records the deepest soundings taken in the unfathomable sea of human imbecility.

So much of Pitt's work was good; let us now turn from the bricks and mortar to the flesh and blood of the army. I have already mentioned that permission had been granted to all men, who had been enlisted for short terms, to take their discharge; it now remains for me to add that almost without exception they took

advantage of the liberty. A bounty of a guinea and a half was offered to all good men who would re-enlist, but hardly a man would look at it. The ranks were depleted to a degree which struck consternation into the Government, for in those days there was plenty of lawlessness and no police. Circulars were despatched to colonels bidding them send out recruiting-parties at once; and the parties were duly despatched, but they could obtain no recruits. They were kept at the work through the summer and autumn of 1785, as well as through the preceding winter and the spring, but without the least result. The case was exactly the same in 1786, in 1787, and in fact in every year up to 1792. The ribbons were flaunted, and the fifes and drums were played from year's end to year's end throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain; but not a man would take the shilling. In 1788 the regiments in Great Britain were directed to send recruiting parties to Ireland, but, though men were rather less unready to enlist across St. George's Channel, they neutralised that advantage by a disproportionate alacrity in deserting. In truth at this period the number of deserters seems almost to have exceeded the number of recruits. In vain the King gave warning that he would confirm the sentence of death, if adjudged, on deserters; no menace of severity had the slightest effect. In Ireland the regular establishment of the infantry was set down at seven thousand men; the annual average of deserters was twelve hundred. Matters at last reached such a pitch that regular depots were formed in Cork and Dublin for the reception of deserters, where they were tried, sentenced to perpetual service abroad, and shipped off by hundreds to the West Indies, from which it

was hoped that they could desert no more. Never before, not even in the days of Walpole, had the Army been reduced to such a condition.

What was the reason, the reader will ask? The answer is simple. The pay of the soldier (and it may be added of the sailor also) was insufficient, and the stoppages were excessive. Eight pence a day had been the pay of the foot-soldier in the days of Philip and Mary; eight-pence a day it was in the thirtieth year of George the Third, with two-pence stopped for clothing and the remainder for food and other expenses. It is literally true that the only alternatives open to the private in the years under review were to desert or to starve. Desertion, too, brought about its own increase. Deserters when captured were necessarily escorted by road from quarter to quarter, which signified very often a march of as much as a hundred miles backwards and forwards. Such long marches of course wore out the shoes and gaiters of the escorting soldiers, who were obliged to replace them at their own cost. This of course meant a further stoppage of already inadequate pay, and inability to purchase pipeclay and other matters for the cleaning of belts and accoutrements. "Hence unable to make the appearance required of him under pain of punishment, unable even to satisfy the common calls of hunger [the words are those of the Adjutant-General] and being without hope of relief, the soldier deserts in despair." This is a lamentable story; yet to our amazement we find the Adjutant-General adding that the case of the subalterns was even harder than that of the privates, and his statement is confirmed by a complaint from the colonels in Ireland that the pay of a subaltern of dragoons barely sufficed for the main-

tenance of his servant and of his horse.

It may be asked whether this insufficiency of the private soldier's pay was a new thing. The answer is, certainly not. As far back as in 1763 the military authorities had called attention to the heightened standard of luxury and comfort in all callings but that of the soldier; and in 1764 there had been an actual mutiny in Canada, in consequence of excessive stoppages. Recruiting had been very difficult during the few years of peace that followed the close of the Seven Years' War, and the reasons had been fully explained; but no Government had the courage to propose an increase of pay. It is absolutely impossible that Pitt could have been ignorant of the Army's grievances, and it was certainly his duty as Prime Minister and as Chancellor of the Exchequer to have redressed them. The King expressed so lively a concern for the sufferings of the soldiers that he can hardly have failed to bring them to the notice of his chief adviser; but it was not until 1792 that the Adjutant-General with the help of Lord Barrington (a former Secretary at War and always a good friend to the soldier), succeeded at last in wringing from Pitt a few additional allowances. These insured the private soldier at any rate food sufficient to keep him alive, and even the magnificent sum of 18s. 10½d. *per annum* payable in bi-mensual instalments, over and above all deductions for his subsistence and his clothing; but the concession was obtained only by sacrificing the claims of the subalterns to relief.

It may be objected that the financial condition of the country sufficiently justified the parsimony of Pitt; let us therefore look a little more deeply into his military administration. It must be remembered that

throughout these years he was pursuing what is called a spirited foreign policy, which threatened to lead England into war with France in 1787, with Spain in 1790, and with Russia in 1791. I am far from contending that his policy was mistaken; the question is how he endeavoured to support it. The natural inference would be that he increased the Army and Navy; and it is true that both in 1787 and in 1790 a temporary augmentation of the Army was voted, and that a bounty of three guineas was offered to recruits. Yet in 1787 it was necessary to enlist prisoners from gaol, discharged seamen, and even Chelsea-pensioners, while in 1790 the whole country was overrun with recruiting-officers and their crimps, and the price of recruits rose to the enormous figure of fifteen guineas a head. It was only with the greatest difficulty and by ruthless drafting that eight battalions could be scraped together—for what service? to do marines' duty on board ship, because seamen were as scarce, under Pitt's administration, as soldiers. In 1791 the story was just the same. "We shall probably be called upon for at least a thousand men for the fleet," wrote the Adjutant-General plaintively; "*how we are to do it until the 14th and 19th arrive home from Jamaica I cannot tell.*"

Was it then on the Militia that Pitt relied for defence? Certainly it was not. He never called out more than two-thirds of them,—twenty-one thousand men—for training in any year: he ignored the scheme of rotation for passing the population through the ranks, which was the essence of his father's Militia Act, though it was shown that he could save money by enforcing it; and he allowed the regiments to be filled by paid substitutes who would otherwise have served in the regular Army. In a word he

suffered the Militia to run to waste like the rest of our armed forces, under the plea of economy. Moreover, that no source of inefficiency and demoralisation should be wanting, he saved a few thousand pounds annually by dispensing with a Commander-in-Chief, whereby the patronage of the Army was thrown into the hands of a mere party politician, the Secretary at War, and the discipline of the whole force, more particularly of the officers, most dangerously impaired. Finally, being unable to spare the money to save his own soldiers from starvation, he, the son of the great Chatham, spent from 1787 onward £40,000 annually as a retaining fee for twelve thousand Hessians, to be ready for service at any moment if called upon.

Thus the money voted for the pay of the Army was wasted in converting honest men into outlaws, while £40,000 was devoted to subsidising foreigners to take their place. Hence when war became inevitable in 1793 the only troops that could be raised for service were three thousand infantry and seven hundred cavalry. At last in 1797 matters came to a climax. Open mutiny in the Navy and threatened mutiny in the Army extorted a sudden increase of the soldier's pay from eightpence to one shilling a day, and an increase of his pocket-money, clear of all stoppages, from nothing in 1781 and 18s. 10½d. in 1792 to £3 8s., or over three hundred per cent. Nor were the subalterns forgotten, for they received an additional shilling a day with remission of stoppages, which augmented their emoluments from thirty to forty-five per cent. Thus was done hastily, in time of war and under threat of mutiny, the justice which had been denied in time of peace. Meanwhile hundreds of poor fellows, who might have made good

soldiers, had been flogged almost to death and transported to bad climates, and hundreds more were at large, recruiting the ranks of smugglers and criminals. These figures are sufficient alone to damn such finance for ever.

It may be said that all this has no bearing on the present state of affairs; but I venture to suggest that it may have. Tens of thousands of men will have completed their term when the present war ends, and their places must be filled; nor, I imagine, would it be prudent at this moment to count upon obtaining levies from Germany, though a subsidy might conceivably still be acceptable. The question of an increase of pay is for wiser heads than mine to decide; but if such increase be called for, it must be granted ungrudgingly. There will of course be a great outcry for reduction of expenditure; but the efficiency of the forces of the Crown must first be ensured, notwithstanding the factious politician who is always with us, possessing all the vices of Fox without his talent and all the impudence of Sheridan without his wit. The question of rotation in the Militia is as urgent now as ever. Finally the control of the Army should not be allowed to fall too much into the hands of a party-politician. Twice already this has happened, in the Administration of Walpole and in the Administration of Pitt, and on each occasion discipline needed to be restored with a very strong hand. We should beware lest we permit the same evil to be repeated, for few of us realise how much it has cost us in the past. The party-system may be necessary to the successful working of representative institutions, but it is the curse of military administration, whether in war or peace.

J. W. FORTESCUE.

EDWARD FITZGERALD ON MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.

"His love of music was one of his earliest passions and remained with him to the last."—W. A. WRIGHT.

AFTER the rare delight of reading **MORE LETTERS OF EDWARD FITZGERALD** it was impossible to resist the temptation to take down the three earlier volumes of his Letters, and enjoy a further instalment of the humour, the kindness, the fine judgment of Carlyle's "peaceable, affectionate, ultra-modest man." No matter how many times they may have been read, the earlier letters are found to be just as fresh as the later ones. One knows by heart what Fitzgerald is going to say on the other side of the page, but the page must be turned, in order that the inimitable language may be read once more. Fitzgerald's judgments are frequently startling, but always possible to be understood by those who have learned to love their author. Occasionally he uses language savouring of the Little Englander; he wounds the feelings of Jane Austen's admirers by his preference for Wilkie Collins; on musical matters there are not a few criticisms which must dispose modern musicians to bite their thumbs at him. But these and all other things are soon forgiven, and right-minded people cannot read him without a feeling that it is pleasanter to disagree with him than to agree with anyone else. The purpose of this article is to make some survey of his references to music and musicians, and bring together his contributions to musical criticism, since they are wholesome, animating, original, and, when knowledge has guided them, singularly sound.

Fitzgerald was credited with the aphorism "Taste is the feminine of Genius," and it is just his taste in music which raises so many interesting considerations. His books were hardly more his friends than were his musical scores; but he did not act upon Dr. Johnson's advice, "Keep your friendships in repair." Thus he troubled little to make new friendships in music, and consequently his knowledge of the best modern music was small. Just as he was content with those men and those books whose worth and faithfulness were proved, so, in music, he was satisfied with the achievements of the older masters and suspicious of the newer schools. He seems to have known instinctively, at the first contact with man or book, what would prove a lifelong friend, and he seldom was at the pains to look twice at anything unless it had enchained his immediate sympathies. So it was with **LOTHAIR**—"a pleasant magic lantern, which I shall forget when it is over;" so with **CARMEN**—"on the Wagner model, very beautiful accompaniments to no melody:" he had never heard one of Wagner's operas! But there were exceptions: for instance, he got over the suspicions which Madame de Sevigné's references to her "eternal daughter" caused him, confessed his error, and could say, like Madame Tellier, "Combien je regrette . . . le temps perdu." Had he been willing to hear and to try to understand modern music, his severe judgments

might perhaps have been modified, if not entirely altered.

"Always beautiful, and melodious:" these words sum up Fitzgerald's musical creed. "I say the Arts are nothing if not beautiful" is the explanation he gives after one of his tirades, and again: "I had thought Beauty was the main object of the Arts; but these people, not having Genius, I suppose, to create any new forms of that, have recourse to the Ugly, and find their worshippers in plenty. In Painting, Poetry, and Music it seems to me the same. And people think all this finer than Mozart, Raffaele, and Tennyson as he was." Melody is his great text: "I have never heard FAUST, only bits. . . . They were expressive, and musically ingenious, but the part of Hamlet, the one divine part of music, Melody, was not there. I think that such a fuss can be made about it only because there is nothing better." And he had only heard "bits" of FAUST, when he said this! Even Beethoven is found guilty of a want of melody. In a letter to W. F. Pollock Fitzgerald says: "I should like to hear FIDELIO again, often as I have heard it. But I do not find so much melody in it as you do, understanding by 'melody' that which asserts itself independently of harmony, as Mozart's airs do—I miss it especially in Leonora's Hope Song, but what with the Passion and Power of the music it is set to, the opera is one of those to hear repeated as often as any." That he was fortunate to have heard FIDELIO so often will be the feeling of those who regret that nowadays so few opportunities of hearing that opera are given them; that he was unfortunate in missing the melody of Leonora's song will be the feeling of everybody. And yet the admission that power and passion could satisfy, even in the absence of

melody, shows that had the man of taste but allowed himself to become familiar with Wagner, he might eventually have understood the power and the passion of that man of genius. To some it may seem a waste of time to listen to the musical opinions of one who could not see melody in the Invocation to Hope, but if Fitzgerald had thought like everyone else upon this and other matters, he would have been a much less delightful person than he is. His Beethoven heresy is no worse than his heresy concerning Miss Austen. What is to be done with a man who writes, "Miss Austen never goes out of the Parlour, and I must think the Woman in White with her Fosco far beyond that"? Yet he is forgiven at once on account of the pleasant observation with which he proceeds: "Cowell reads Miss Austen at night, it composes him like Gruel or Paisiello's music, which Napoleon liked, because he found it did not interrupt his thoughts." So when we read what he has to say about Mozart and Handel, we forget that he has criticised Beethoven and denounced Wagner. Besides, the honesty and the boldness of it all must disarm every lover of books or music who is not a pedant. Fitzgerald did not like pedants, and perhaps it is as well that he was imperfectly acquainted with certain compositions much applauded nowadays, else he might have said of them as he did of a great poet: "I never read ten lines of him without stumbling on some pedantry which tipped me at once out of Paradise or even Hell into the Schoolroom, which is worse than either."

He held Mozart to have had the purest and most universal genius among musical composers.

As to Mozart, he was, as a musical genius, more wonderful than all, and Don Giovanni is the greatest opera in the world. . . . The Finale of

Beethoven's C minor is very noble, but on the whole, I like Mozart better: Beethoven is gloomy, besides, Mozart is incontestably the purest musician. Beethoven could have been Poet or Painter as well, for he had a great deep soul, and imagination. . . . When I heard Alexander's Feast at Norwich, I wondered, but when directly afterwards they played Mozart's G minor, it seemed as if I had passed out of a land of savages into sweet civilised life.

Some folk, I dare say, think Mozart too civilised, and would say that he seldom got out of the parlour and its not very deep-imagining inmates. Fitzgerald knew better. To Pollock he writes in 1873: "I have seen the Old Masters, finished them off by such a Symphony as was worthy of the best of them, two Acts of Mozart's *Cost* . . . the singing was inferior; but the Music itself! . . . well: I did not like even Mozart's two Bravuras for the Ladies: but the rest was fit for—Raffaello, whose Christ in the Garden I had been looking at a little before." Two years later he thought seriously of going to London to hear a selection from LOHENGRIN at the Promenade Concerts, but the journey was never undertaken: "Indolence and Despair of my own satisfaction has left me where I am. *Malim Mozartii recordari quam cum Wagnero versari*, if that be Latin." Perhaps he had been opening Mozart's Requiem at the *Recordare*, and if so, is it to be wondered at if he felt that, with such music in his possession, he could afford to do without Wagner's?

Though his views about Mozart never changed (and it may be questioned if a whole-hearted Mozartian can be a whole-hearted Wagnerian at the same time), his views about Wagner and the moderns became less fierce as he grew older. The year before his death he is found willing to allow that there might be some

merit in the composer whose ideas of art soared beyond beauty and melody. "I had meant to hear some opera of Wagner's, but did not; I dare say I should not have stayed out half, but then, I could never do more with the finest Oratorio. But I should have heard the Music of the Future, sure to interest one in its orchestral expression, and if no melody, none previously expected by me." This is magnanimous, but the thought of music which sacrificed melody to expression was evidently not an agreeable one, and he turns to a pleasanter topic, that of Bellini: "How pretty of the severe old contrapuntist Cherubini saying to some one who found fault with Bellini's meagre accompaniments, 'They are all and just what is wanted for his beautiful simple Airs.'" Later on he confesses to the same correspondent (Frederick Tennyson): "You have heard more of Wagner than I, who have evidently heard but one piece, *not* the March, from TANNHAUSER, played by the Brass Band at Lowestoft Pier." Wagnerians may smile at the idea of a judgment based on their hero from the scraps of him let fall by a German Band. I am not, however, concerned to defend Fitzgerald from the charge of having criticised what he knew so little about, and it should be remembered that he wrote before the time when sufficient opportunity was given us of hearing Wagner. But it is important to note that we have here ample evidence as to the keenness of his musical instincts, and his desire to be fair to what he felt he should dislike.

Notwithstanding his outspoken acknowledgment of Mozart's supremacy (for which a few old-fashioned souls will devoutly bless him) Fitzgerald seems, on the whole, to have derived his chief pleasure from the music of Handel, to which the refer-

ences in his letters, especially in the two earlier volumes, are very frequent. His criticisms of the *caro Sassone* are indisputably original, and worthy of serious attention as coming from an ardent musician of the finest taste, whose intimate knowledge of his subject was the outcome of genuine love. Fitzgerald thought him less remarkable as a composer of sacred than as a master of secular music. Most musicians, I fancy, would differ from him on this point, and find the finest example of Handel's genius in some of his oratorios, the *Passion Music* of the *MESSIAH* for example, but Fitzgerald had a decided objection to oratorios, and this dislike probably influenced his judgment upon Handel's power of illustrating religious thought and scene. The very first allusion to music in his early Letters is a gibe at the dulness of oratorios; "I am at present rather liable to be overset by any weariness, and where can any be found that can match the effect of two oratorios?" Shortly after this he gives to Frederick Tennyson (the friend who most of all drew him out to express himself on musical topics) a very characteristic appreciation of Handel.

Acis and Galatea is one of Handel's best, and as classical as anyone who wore a full-bottomed wig could write. I think Handel never got out of his wig, that is, out of his age. His *Hallelujah Chorus* is a chorus, not of angels, but of well-dressed earthly choristers, ranged tier above tier in a Gothic Cathedral, with princes for audience, and their military trumpets flourishing over the full volume of the Organ. Handel's gods are like Homer's, and his sublime never reaches beyond the region of the clouds. Therefore I think that his great *Marches*, triumphal pieces and *Coronation Anthems* are his finest works.

I do not doubt that there is some truth in this, but Fitzgerald follows it up with something that is sufficiently amazing: "There is a bit

of Auber (in the *BAYADÈRE*) which has more of pure light and mystical solemnity than anything I know of Handel's." I say this is amazing, and yet how splendid it is to hear the man speaking his mind with such a sincerity! To mention Handel and Auber in the same sentence must have appeared as the sin of witchcraft to the generation with whom Handel ranked as a religious influence with St. Paul or John Bunyan. The present generation of Englishmen hardly knows that such a composer as Auber existed, and to them the audacity of Fitzgerald's remark will hardly be apparent. But those who know something of Auber will admire this instance of the expression of honest conviction, even if they are not a little amused by it. Of course Fitzgerald did not mean to compare the work of the two composers as a whole, for he adds: "This, however, is only a scrap; Auber could not breathe long in that atmosphere, whereas Handel's coursers, with necks clothed with thunder, and long-resounding pace, never tire. Beethoven thought more deeply also [the *also* is curious], but I don't know if he could sustain himself so well." Whatever may be thought of this last conjecture, it is difficult not to wish that Fitzgerald had elaborated a tract (not, however, in the Carlyle manner) on the *INFLUENCE OF WIGS UPON MUSICAL THOUGHT*. He returns to the subject in another letter to Tennyson.

Concerning the bagwigs of composers. Handel's was not a bagwig . . . such were Haydn's and Mozart's—much less influential on the character: much less ostentatious in themselves: not towering so high, nor rolling down in following curls so low as to overlay the nature of the brain within. But Handel wore the Sir Godfrey Kneller wig: greatest of wigs. . . . Such a wig was a fugue in itself.

Then, after another affirmation that Mozart was the most universal musical genius, he starts upon what was clearly a favourite topic concerning the power and limitations of music. "Beethoven is apt to be too analytical and erudite, but his inspiration is nevertheless true. He tried to think in music, almost to reason in music, whereas we should be perhaps contented with feeling in it. It can never speak very definitely." This is strikingly put, and there is more than an element of truth in the warning given against attempts to reason in music. Fitzgerald gets upon much-debated ground when he proceeds to illustrate his contention as to the indefiniteness of music by references to songs set to words for which they were not originally intended, but what he says is delightful.

There is that famous "Holy Holy" in Handel: nothing can sound more simple and devotional: but it is only lately adapted to those words, being originally (I believe) a love-song in *ROSELINDA*. Well, lovers adore their mistresses more than God. Then the famous music of "He layeth the beam of his chamber" was originally fitted to an Italian pastoral song, *Nasce al bosco in rossa cuna, un felice pastorello*. That part which seems so well to describe "the wings of the wind" falls happily in with *E con l'aura di fortuna* with which this pastorello sailed along. The character of the music is ease and largeness: as the shepherd lived, so God Almighty walked on the wind. The music breathes ease, but words must tell us who takes it easy.

I will not spoil the airiness of the passage by comment. Next we have Beethoven brought in to emphasise the danger of trusting to sound as an interpreter of scene.

Beethoven's Sonata, op. 14, is meant to express the discord and gradual atonement of two lovers, or a man and his wife, and he was disgusted that every one did not see what was meant: in truth it expresses any resistance gra-

dually overcome,—Dobson shaving with a blunt razor, for instance. Music is so far the most universal language, that any one piece in a particular strain symbolises all the analogous phenomena spiritual or material—if you can talk of spiritual phenomena. The Eroica Symphony describes the battle of the passions as well as of armed men. This is long and twaddling discourse, but the walls of Charlotte St. in Lent present little else to twaddle about.

What excellent twaddle! It is not my object to promulgate my own opinion as to the questions of musical philosophy raised by Fitzgerald, and I will resist the desire to compose a long paragraph about modern views of programme music. My desire is to call the attention of amateurs to Fitzgerald's entertaining arguments rather than to examine them myself in print.

Two years later Fitzgerald stumbles no longer at the idea of thinking in music. He tells Frederick Tennyson that a "dreadful vulgar ballad, 'I dreamt that I dwelt,' is being sung by Miss Rainforth with unbounded applause," and that an opera *LE DESERT* has not been successful. This he does not wonder at, for in "Nearly all French things there is a clever showy surface, but no Holy of Holies, far withdrawn, conceived in the depth of a mind, and only to be received into the depth of ours after much attention. Beethoven has a depth not to be reached at once. I admit, with you, that he is too bizarre and I think morbid, but he is original, majestic, profound. Such music *thinks*; so it is with Mozart, Gluck, and Mendelssohn." If Mozart thought in music, then Fitzgerald would consider that all other composers had received permission to do so; but, as we shall see presently, he did not in the end admit Mendelssohn into the high company of thinkers.

To return to Handel.

I play of evenings some of Handel's great choruses which are the bravest music after all. I am getting to the true John Bull style of music. I delight in Allegro and Penseroso. Handel certainly does in music what old Bacon desires in his Essay on Masques; "Let the Songs be loud and cheerful, not puling." One would think the Water Music was written from this text. . . . I grow every day more and more to love only the old "God save the King" style, the common chords, those truisms of music, like other truisms, so little understood. Just look at the mechanism of "Robin Adair." . . . I plunge away at my old Handel, the Penseroso full of pomp and fancy. . . . My admiration for the old giant grows and grows, his is the music for a great, active people.

But sacred music, even that of Handel, as has been said, left him unsatisfied. As late as 1863, when his judgment was thoroughly mature, he mentions this—shall I call it prejudice? He pities Donne for

Undergoing those dreadful Oratorios. . . . I never heard one that was not tiresome, and in part ludicrous. Such subjects are scarce fitted for catgut—Even Magnus Handel, even MESSIAH!—He, Handel, was a good old Pagan at heart, and till he had to yield to the fashionable piety of England, stuck to operas and cantatas where he could plunge and frolic without being tied down to orthodoxy. And these are to my mind his really great works, the Anthems where Human Pomp is to be illustrated.

Beethoven was evidently too morbid and introspective for Fitzgerald, his appeals to what George Eliot called "conflict, passion, and the sense of the Universal" awakened but little response in the poet's heart: "I think Beethoven spasmodically rather than sustainedly great." But he thought the overture to *EGMONT* a fine thing, and allowed that there was much good in the

Symphonies. It is easy to understand why the plain speaking of Handel, the melody, clarity, and even temper of Mozart should have so specially attracted him. It is harder to explain the attitude towards Beethoven, unless the solution of the difficulty is the same as that which accounts for his indifference to modern music, namely, that he never knew him really as well as he did Mozart and Handel. Fitzgerald had plenty of feeling for Napoleon's *pauvre et triste humanité*,—humanity in its depths, not in its superficial appearances—and if Beethoven has not expressed that feeling, then it has never been expressed in music.

Haydn was, of course, a favourite, and Fitzgerald thought him the finest composer of pastoral music such as that "Blessed Chorus 'Come gentle spring,'" sung at the Ancient Concerts by the ladies who had sung when George the Third was King: "I can see them now, the dear old *creeters* with the gold eyeglasses and their turbans, noddling their heads as they sang."

About Mendelssohn his opinions changed. In 1842, hearing of a "fine new symphony" (this must have been the Scotch symphony performed by the Philharmonic) he writes to Tennyson, "He is by far our best writer now, and in some degree combines Beethoven and Handel." Of the *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* he finds the overture far the best, but "There is a very noble triumphal march;" presently, however, he hears *ELIJAH* and, "it was not at all worth the trouble. Though very good music, it is not original, Haydn much better." Then comes a curiously interesting and, I think, prophetic remark: "The day of Oratorio is gone, like the day for painting Holy Families. But we cannot get tired of what has been done in Oratorio, any more than we can get tired of Raffaele. Men-

delssohn is really original and beautiful in romantic music, witness MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM and FINGAL'S CAVE."

Soon we come to "Mendelssohn's things are mostly tiresome to me, Handel comforts me." He might have taken these last three words as his musical device, from the days when he had listened to Mrs. Frere (a pupil of Bartleman) at Downing College, to those last when, two days before his death, he wrote: "I never hear a note of music, except when I drum out some old tune on an organ which might be carried about the streets with a handle to turn, and a monkey on the top." We cannot doubt that the "old tune" was some chorus of Handel. His last allusion to Mendelssohn is an amusingly indignant comment on a story. When some of his worshippers were sneering at Donizetti's LA FIGLIA, Mendelssohn silenced them by saying "Do you know, I should like to have written it myself?" Says Fitzgerald, "If he meant that he ever could have written it if he had pleased, he ought to have had his nose tweaked." He had asked wistfully about Sullivan's Tennyson Cycle: "Is there a tune or originally melodious phrase in any of it? That is what I always missed in Mendelssohn, except in two or three of his youthful pieces." Rossini he admired immensely, and spoke of him as a genius; he does not seem to have known Schubert; Spohr and Schumann are not mentioned; Gounod was banished with Mendelssohn's condemnation; Verdi he liked. These things, however, are comparatively unimportant. What really matters, and is grievous, is that there is no indication in the Letters that Fitzgerald had the delight of numbering Bach among his musical friends. He never breaks off some account of a dull evening with "But then Bach

came into my room." Once a Prelude is mentioned, but only in a casual way. Perhaps he felt about Bach as he did about the Elgin Marbles: "I do not understand them, though I feel sure they are the finest of all."

If he kept to the old ways as regards composers, he was still more staunch as regards singers. Pasta was his idol, and he speaks affectionately of the Opera Colonnade where he used to see the *affiche* "Medea in Corinto—Medea, Signora Pasta." For some time he would not go to hear Jenny Lind, for "I could not make out that she was a great singer like my old Pasta," and when at last he did go, it was a disappointment. "I was told it was my own fault, but as to naming her in the same Olympiad with great old Pasta, I am sure that is ridiculous." If it is true that Siddons said she could have learned tragedy from Pasta, and that as the latter said of herself she had *beaucoup senti l'antique*, perhaps Fitzgerald was right. But he was undeniably hard to please. Grisi he thought "coarse," and a "caricature of Pasta," only Lablache was "great," and that was in the days which we, unfortunate, suppose to have been a Golden Age of singers. Piccolomini he found to be the best "singer of Genius and Passion, with a Voice that told both." He was told she was no singer, but the passion and the voice made amends for that. This is not the usually accepted verdict on the little lady who enchanted society fifty years ago, but failed to satisfy the eminent critic Mr. Chorley. Of that well-known musical writer, Fitzgerald has a pretty thing to say: "Though irritable, he is an affectionate creature, but I think the angels must take care to keep in tune when he gets among them." Of singers nearer our own time he only

mentions one, and it is pleasant to know that, though he did not like CARMEN in which he heard her, he found Trebelli a very good singer indeed.

An account of Fitzgerald's musical doings at his home by the river "which brings me Tidings every day of the Sea," has been given by his old friend Archdeacon Groome in Mr. Wright's preface to the first volume of the Letters. He taught his poorer neighbours to sing; he joined in glee-singing at Mr. Crabbe's; he composed, but I have never seen any of his compositions. Perhaps these were not of much value; perhaps his ideas about adapting words to music for which they were not meant (witness his proposal for an arrangement of some Tennyson to FIDELIO!) were freaks of imagination not to be praised; perhaps his tendency to decide whether he liked a thing before he had taken pains to understand it was one not to be widely imitated,—but his love for what was genuine, and melodious, and delightful, (he speaks of a once favourite author as "wonderful but not delightful, which is what one thirsts for as one grows older"), guided as it was by a taste which never failed when he really knew his subject, made him a singularly sound critic of the music which he loved. As in literature, so in music, his sympathies were above all things unaffected. The Lowestoft Band with its "German Waltzes and a capital sailor's tramp-chorus from Wagner," was cheerful and pleasant to him. Some Jullien concerts he

found dull, because there were no waltzes and polkas. One of the happiest memories of a visit to Paris was the street-singing of "*Bons habitants de ce village*" to a barrel-organ one fine evening on the Boulevard. He loved to think of the "Little Theatre" in the Haymarket, because there Vestris sang "CHERRY RIPE, one of the dozen immortal English tunes." Whatever in music was childlike and innocent and tender and sweet, he loved as well as the stately pomp of his dear Handel. To say that he was an independent critic of music is to use a word of insufficient strength; he was absolutely free, not only from the influence of his musical friends, but from the influence of the spirit of his age, and formed his own judgment by the rule of melody and beauty, utterly banning what he called the "Gurgoyle school of Art." So great was the honesty, so interesting the originality of his judgment, that it were well if he could return to us and examine some of the music (as well as some of the literature) which a bewildered public is bidden to admire, to the prejudice of simpler and purer art. "I *will* worship Walter Scott," he said, "in spite of Gurlyle, who sent me an ugly autotype of John Knox which I was to worship instead." It may be taken as tolerably certain that Fitzgerald would have continued to worship the Walter Scotts of music, in spite of all the prophets who offer us "ugly autotypes" in their place.

C. W. JAMES.

WHO WROTE "PARADISE LOST"?

IN the disastrous year 1857, when the fate of our Empire in India was trembling in the balance, the daughter of a great Rajah (whose name must for high reasons of State, remain unrevealed) rescued from otherwise inevitable massacre a young and brilliant English officer, the distinguished son of a distinguished father who, having left England in his boyhood, had spent his life in that distant province, and was killed by rebels at an early stage of the mutiny, leaving to the special care of his son, should he be fortunate enough to escape with his life, a certain sealed cabinet, which he regarded as his greatest treasure. The son, captivated by the charms of his deliverer, remained faithful to her and spent the remainder of a short but happy life at her father's palace, and after a few years died of cholera, leaving behind him a daughter who, on reaching womanhood, married a young civilian, bringing to him, as part of her dowry, the cabinet which had been left to the charge of her father, but which, curiously enough, had never been opened since his death. Whether it was regarded with some superstitious reverence as a kind of Pandora's box, the contents of which would take to themselves wings if ever the seals were removed, or whether it had been left unopened merely from carelessness is not known; the fact only is clear that the cabinet reached the hands of its present owner with the seals intact. When at length these were broken and the contents examined, they were found to consist of some remarkable documents, namely, a set of proofs of *PARADISE LOST*

printed in type of a peculiar character. By far the greater number of letters were ordinary English type of a somewhat old fashion, but interspersed among these at very irregular intervals were letters of the Greek alphabet. No printer's name could be found, but the date 1658 appeared at the end of each book.

The owner, who is still in India and likely to remain there for some years, set himself to discover the reason for the introduction of the Greek letters. At first there appeared none, unless it were possibly an idea of the author's to prevent the unlearned from reading his book. This explanation, however, did not seem satisfactory, particularly as it frequently happened that two or three consecutive lines would be found without a single Greek letter.

It will be well here to quote the opening lines of the poem showing the peculiar character of the printing.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the
fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal
taste
Brought death into the world, and all
our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater
Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful
seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse! that on the
sacred top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the
chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heavens and
earth
Rose out of Chaos. Or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, or Siloa's brook that
flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence

Invoke thy aid to my adventurous
song
That with no middle height intends to
soar.

For a long time the owner of the proofs puzzled over the question, reading the whole poem over and over again, trying to induce in his brain the idea that must have been in the mind of the author and governed the arrangement; but in vain,—no clue presented itself.

After a time it occurred to him to select the Greek letters in the first fifty lines or so and write them out consecutively thus,—

Ολιβερχρωμυελλωθερυσεκνωναςφρανκισβακων.

This, however, did not help him. Although he had obtained nearly the maximum of marks for Greek in the examination for the Indian Civil Service, this, and other series of letters suggested no idea to his brain.

At length after months of thinking and guessing, a happy thought occurred to him. He would write down the Greek and substitute English letters for them, and then he found

Olivercromwellotherwiseknownasfrancisbacon,

which soon assumed the form,

Oliver Cromwell otherwise known as Francis Bacon.

Here at last was the clue, and now he proceeded to transcribe the Greek writing by means of it, and very soon, though here and there the division of the words presented some difficulty, a connected story unfolded itself; and a truly marvellous story it was.

It must be understood that all this happened several years ago, and was at the time quite unintelligible except on the hypothesis that some one had introduced a wildly improb-

able story into a copy of PARADISE LOST and had had it printed in this remarkable way. But even then the date, 1658, seemed unaccountable, as it was well known that at that date the poem, though generally believed to have been begun in that year, had not been written.

Now, however, in the light of recent scientific discoveries, the whole wonderful story appears under a new aspect, and not only is the story itself verified by these discoveries, but in its turn it adds one more link to the chain of irrefragable proof that Sir Francis Bacon was the author of practically the whole of the literature of the Elizabethan age.

Wonderful indeed is it that not only were the works of Shakespeare, Spenser and the other giants of that time written by one man, and that man the rightful heir to the throne of England, but, as we shall presently see, this very man's son was the undoubted author of the greatest English epic, PARADISE LOST.

No, the glories of the empyrean, the crowns of amaranth and gold, are not the seraphic vision of a poor blind old man, at loggerheads with his wife and tyrannising over his daughters, but are indeed the outpourings of the spirit of the greatest of England's monarchs—king, not *de facto*, but *de jure*; king, not in name but in fact; Oliver Cromwell, direct descendant of the great Henry, the greater Elizabeth, the greatest Sir Francis Bacon; himself the very greatest of all, disguised, not like his renowned father as a philosopher and a judge, but in the humble guise of a simple brewer, whose name and style he assumed for the purpose of concealing his royal origin.

But we are anticipating, and must come back to the story developed in the poem, which is briefly to this effect.

Oliver Cromwell was no more Oliver Cromwell than Shakespeare was Shakespeare, or Bacon was Bacon. Still less, however, was Oliver Cromwell Milton. Nothing of the kind! The man known to history as Oliver Cromwell was no other than the son of Sir Francis Bacon by his hitherto unknown secret marriage with Mary Queen of Scots (to whom, as is well known, a husband more or less was a matter of supreme indifference), and thus united in his own person the heirship to the thrones of England and Scotland, as direct inheritor of both kingdoms.

The story of Sir Francis Bacon's life as exhibited in the Shakespeare folio is narrated at some length in *PARADISE LOST* and is continued down to the time of his death, and the author gives the principal events of his own life and explains how it was that he never proclaimed his birth and parentage. The fact was that, though having all this royal blood in his veins, he was by nature and conviction a staunch Republican, and determined at quite an early age that he would win, if not the crown and throne themselves, at any rate an equivalent position, by his own merits, and would never accept them from the mere accident of birth. And as he aspired to become a ruler of men by the force of his character, so he determined to leave behind him a more enduring monument in the great epic which he composed in such odd moments as he could spare from commanding armies, slaughtering kings, removing baubles, breaking up parliaments (particularly the "infernal peers" he refers to in the poem) and other occupations of State. And in order that future ages might know the truth he conceived the idea of imitating his father's plan of leaving the story hidden in cypher in the book.

It appears, however, that he only

lived long enough to see the proofs, and died before the poem was given to the world.

So much is evident in regard to the authorship of the book and the interpretation of the cypher. Milton's connection with it remains a matter of conjecture, the probability being that he knew all about the poem, obtained possession either of the manuscript or of the proofs, made his daughters make a written copy, omitting the Greek letters, the meaning of which he may or may not have understood, and had it reprinted, designing to publish it in his own name. It would also seem practically certain that one of the compositors who had been employed in setting up the original copy must have, by some accident, come into the service of Milton's publisher and imparted the secret to his new master, who took advantage of the knowledge thus acquired to beat Milton down in the matter of price, compelling him under threat of disclosure to accept the paltry traditional five pounds, with some further small payments on the three years' system, on condition that Milton's name should appear on the title-page as the author. So curiously are the most romantic history and the most sordid bargains woven together in this strange world of ours!

That the story unfolded in the cypher will meet with immediate and universal acceptance is hardly to be expected; and it will be well to examine it from one or two points of view, in order to ascertain whether there is any external evidence in support of it. First let us consider the probabilities as to the man known to history as Oliver Cromwell being indeed the son of Sir Francis Bacon and Mary Stewart. There is a very striking passage in Clarendon's *HISTORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION* which very plainly hints that Cromwell's

origin was really something much higher than was generally supposed. He says that it was hardly credible that one of private and obscure birth could have attained to the position he held, wherein he was not merely absolute ruler in his own country, but his greatness at home was but a shadow of the glory he had abroad. If, then, Clarendon, who had every opportunity of forming a sound judgment, strongly suspected that Cromwell's parentage was other than was generally believed, we need not feel surprised if this surmise should prove to be correct.

Again, once admit that Sir Francis Bacon was the son of Elizabeth and Leicester and we see that he would naturally desire a union with Mary, both as befitting his own royal dignity and as still further strengthening his son's right to the throne. It is clear that the reasons that induced him to refrain from putting forward his own claim to the crown would compel him to keep secret the fact of his marriage and of the birth of his son. Moreover, if Cromwell was the true heir to the throne we can well understand his desire for the execution of Charles, and his deep disappointment when, after all, he found he could not prudently accept the proffered crown and thus attain the summit of his own and his father's ambition.

In spite, however, of the inherent probability of the story there will doubtless be cavillers,—we had almost written cavaliers—who will refuse to believe in the royal descent of the king of the Roundheads.

Turning now to the evidence in favour of the received theory, on what grounds does the man in the arm-chair form his opinions? The process may be fairly represented in this way. A man, whom we may call Smith, informs another, whom we may call Jones, that Queen Anne is dead.

Jones repeats the statement to Robinson, Robinson to Brown, Brown to Black, and Black to White, and thus we are supposed to have the combined evidence of Smith, Jones, Robinson, Brown, and Black to the decease of the lady in question, whereas, as a matter of fact, the statement rests solely on the testimony of Smith and is not in the slightest degree confirmed by being repeated by Jones and the rest. Then, in the not very remote future, another man, Jackson, will arise, and prove that Smith's original statement was wanting in veracity, and that not only is Queen Anne not dead, but that she never lived; and thus Jackson will take his place in the Temple of Fame as a Higher Critic, and the descendant of the man in the arm-chair will think what a foolish fellow his grandfather was to have accepted the statement of Smith on the faith of the confirmatory evidence, as he thought it, of Jones, Robinson, Brown, and Black.

On the strength of such testimony as this rest the received opinions that Shakespeare wrote the plays generally attributed to him, that Oliver Cromwell was the son of a brewer, and Milton the author of *PARADISE LOST*. As a matter of fact, if we examine *L'ALLEGRO* and *IL PENSEROSO*, *COMUS*, and so on, we need not possess any very deep critical acumen to discover that *PARADISE REGAINED* was about Milton's measure, and that he could no more have written *PARADISE LOST* than Shakespeare could have written *HAMLET*.

Now whether the story of the cypher be true or false in regard to Cromwell's parentage, the fact that he wrote *PARADISE LOST* is really incontestable when one comes to examine the poem in a critical and judicial spirit, for here we have much more solid ground to go on

than a mere comparison of styles. We need not go into the question of the use or disuse of words and phrases. We need not catalogue the words used in Milton's prose-works and those found in the poem, and say, such and such words constantly occur in the former and never in the latter, while other words of frequent occurrence in the poem are not found in the prose, and that, consequently, the prose and the poem cannot have been written by the same author. Such a method of procedure is useful, necessary, and convincing for some purposes, and especially when the results agree with our preconceived opinions; but in the present case we have much more definite signs to guide us, in the design and structure of the poem itself. Space only allows of our giving one instance here, but that is taken from the very commencement of the poem and is of such a nature as to convince the most sceptical, though it consists merely of the use of the simple word *of*. It is not the first time in the world's history that momentous issues have been determined by so small a matter.

Every thoughtful reader must have been struck with the fact that this magnificent and magniloquent poem begins with so insignificant a word. It is the more remarkable because the writer was almost ostentatiously founding himself on the models of Homer and Virgil, and following these he would naturally, unless he had some special reason to the contrary, have commenced

Man's primal disobedience, and the fruit,

placing man, the subject of the poem, in the very forefront. Or he might have begun "Sing heavenly muse," &c., or in a dozen other ways; but

no, nothing will satisfy him but "*Of* man's first disobedience," &c. There is another poem of equal fame, which, though not written in quite such a classical style, has, we understand, come down to us from the most remote antiquity in the form of a solar myth. It begins

Sing a song of sixpence;

whereas, on the model of *PARADISE LOST* it should be

Of a song of sixpence sing,

which is manifestly, as Euclid would have said, absurd.

Of course the commentators pass the matter over in silence, as is their custom when anything specially demands explanation. Doubtless many of them have cudgelled their brains to discover the reason, and having been unsuccessful they have discreetly agreed to say nothing about it. But now, in the light of the newly-discovered cypher, what is the meaning of this remarkable *of*? Clearly this, that Oliver Cromwell, in writing the poem and narrating his history in the cypher, made a special point of putting his own name in the very foremost place and determined to have an O as the first letter.

If it be objected that, according to the cypher, Oliver Cromwell was not his real name, the answer is obvious; it was the name by which he was known, and he was obliged to introduce it before he could explain who he really was.

Here we may well leave the subject: no further argument can be needed to prove that the real author of *PARADISE LOST* was Oliver Cromwell, otherwise King Francis the Second.

W. H. T.

THE RULER OF TAROIKA.

KENION was uncrowned king of Taroika, where, with the German Rhyner for his chief counsellor, he ruled over some two hundred half-naked subjects and an empty treasury. Taroika lies on the outskirts of Polynesia, a long chain of surf-washed coral set in warm shimmering seas, inside which are sprinkled patches of brightest verdure, dazzling beaches, and swaying wisps of cocoa-nut palms overhanging a still lagoon. Why he first came there, a young adventurous Englishman bringing with him what purported to be a lease of one island from its native owner, even Rhyner, who had nursed him through two fevers, did not know; but he seemed astonished to find a swarm of suspicious and partly hostile Kannakas waiting him on the beach.

Explanations followed, and Kenion informed the German that the Sydney man, who had taken his money and negotiated the affair, told him it was a comparatively easy matter to grow rich there on copra. He could shoot and fish while the cocoa-nuts grew, the latter said; then he had only to gather them and dry the kernel which was copra worth ten pounds a ton, while it would cost him about thirty shillings to collect and ship it. Thereupon the German, smothering a guttural laugh, said: "Then you vas badly let in. Dot man who lease der island lif in der next archipelago, und if he here come dese people drown him. There is already two mans who say he own dot island, so you start anoder bargain und I help you."

Kenion remembered it all, as one listless night he lay in the stern-

sheets of a fine whaleboat returning from a visit to Rhyner's outlying islet across the lagoon. A glittering crescent hung above the dusky sea which, touched here and there with brightness, heaved in long pulsations upon the sheltering reef. The tall, dew-soaked lugsail was scarcely filled by the spice-laden breeze which wafted the boat along with a musical tinkling under her bows and a silky wake in the water astern, that, save for the sheen of reflected stars, looked like thin black ice. One naked foot hanging over the gunwale trailed in it, and resting his bronzed cheek upon his elbow Kenion lay still, languidly content, while the events of those early days rose up before him.

He had divided half his remaining capital between the rival claimants, and personally chastised a fraudulent third, after which he proceeded to cultivate the cocoa-nut trees. Twice a hurricane blew most of them down, and native cattle trampled the life out of his young plantations; but Kenion was obstinate, and had sunk all his money in that venture. So he cut down expenses and worked from dawn to dusk, kept a check on his temper, and paid his men in full, giving them presents of fish-hooks when they did particularly well, besides exhibitions of skill with rifle and boat-tiller. So the dusky men, who were called Kannakas by courtesy being as much Malay as Polynesian, began to respect, and then to like him. Afterwards they brought him curious disputes to settle, while Rhyner, when sufficiently sober, came over from a neighbouring island with sage advice.

Thus, little by little, Kenion found that even against his will it devolved upon him to practically govern the place, and reluctantly accepted the task.

Rhyner now lounged beside him smoking very bad tobacco which he grew himself, a big, slovenly, bearded man, with a fund of quaint philosophy and a kindly heart, whom the Kannakas also liked but did not respect, for he suffered from alcohol and fits of baresark rage. It was by his advice Kenion commenced pearl-fishing. There were pearls in that lagoon, small and poor in colour, but they helped to keep Taroika in a state of partial solvency.

"You think much and talk nod-ings," said Rhyner at length, as the palms about the landing grew blacker ahead. "It is in der night, I think, too, how I come here ten year ago in der broken whaleboat mit Obermann who die. What it is come to you?"

Kenion laughed a little as he shook himself, and answered: "All sorts of things, but mostly concerning the exchequer. We want wire, galvanised iron, hatchets, and I have six months' wages due. I was wondering if that pearl-shell and copra would see us through. Graham should call with the WARRIGAL shortly, and so far I've never disappointed my people on settling-day. Perhaps that's the reason they follow me."

Then there was silence again accentuated by the monotone of the surf, until a flickering blaze appeared among the palms ahead, and a clamour of voices reached them with wild bursts of merriment. "Dose Kannaka all gone mad," said Rhyner. "Why it is to-night they make all dot jamboree?"

Kenion answered nothing, for he felt uneasy, and the feeling deepened when wading ashore he found half his subjects most indecently drunk, and

the rest dancing wildly round a bonfire. There was no sign of the copra, nor, when he crossed to the other beach, of the shell, and finding his dusky storekeeper with much labour he shook the explanation out of him. A white man, who said he was a friend of the trader's, came there in a schooner two days ago, the Kannaka gasped. He was a good-natured white man and occupied the house, where he feasted royally, and entertained the leading natives with Kenion's liquor. He also produced a letter from the latter, which, as no one could read, he kindly translated. They were to load the shell and copra into his schooner, it said, and he was to give them sundry cases of spirits for doing it smartly. Then he would take ten boys back with him to help the trader at an outlying plantation. It was done, and they got the liquor (out of Kenion's store) while the schooner went to sea that afternoon, though a native showed the white man the whaleboat coming, after which the narrator waited for the approbation he did not receive.

Kenion, losing his temper for once, knocked the Kannaka's head hard against a palm, and told him in two idioms what kind of a fool he was. Then he hurried into the house, and found a state of chaos there, and a scurrilous comment written across a photograph on the wall. Whether the original of it were living or dead Rhyner never knew, though he suspected it was that picture which prevented Kenion following his example by choosing a comely helpmate from the daughters of the people. Then the ruler of Taroika came forth again and stood in the flickering firelight, a tall man in frayed duck garments with long hair and face darkened by the tropic sun; but now in place of fury a cold vindictive purpose shone in his eye.

"It's dawning on me, Rhyner, I'm a ruined man," he said. "I'll have to give the place up and take to beach-combing unless I can get those goods back. The rascal has also cleaned out six months' stores and looted the last of my clothes, leaving me his own rags with a message hoping they would fit me. It's not a joke, confound you!"

"What he look like, dat white man?" asked the other checking a laugh. "A scar on his cheek, and one leg gone lame!—so, I guess him. It is dot villains Cooper; he play der same trick in Fiji. He come here short-handed looking for Kannaka crew, and joomp mit both feet on der opportunity. Dot man he come to a bad end some day."

"Never mind that," said Kenion. "It will be ever so long before the gunboat calls, and by the time Graham gets to Sydney Cooper will have disappeared again. What are we to do?"

"Mit dis light wind und chance of a tornado," answered the German meditatively, "he pass outside all der atoll und nor-est reef, und dot make one hundred mile, so sailing south in der whaleboat we him perhaps pick up by der twin point head, a sixty mile voyage."

"I'd follow him across the Pacific," said Kenion, "and we'll start at once. The surf's very bad on the southern entrance, but we'll have to chance it."

By this time the most sober Kannakas had grasped the position, and several score of dusky men swarmed about the whaleboat, fighting to get into her. Kenion picked out several of the sturdiest, carried down two rifles and provisions, and grasping the tiller bade them pull across the lagoon. The firelight faded astern, many voices hurled good wishes after them, till they were lost in the boom of the surf.

Ahead ghostly breakers tossed their white crests in the air, and a cloud of spray veiled the entrance, while Kenion stood up in the sternsheets watching the coral appear and vanish among the rush of phosphorescent seas, as the long roll of the Pacific hurled itself thundering on the reef. Then, as a swirl of luminous water swept hissing into the lagoon, he shouted. The oars bent together, the boat shot forward at the sturdy stroke, and drove out with the backwash through the coral-walled passage. A hissing comber met her on the way, hove the light shell of pinewood aloft, and with lambent froth boiling over the bows bore her backwards a moment. Kenion shouted himself hoarse; the Kannakas strained every muscle, for they knew what would happen if they struck the reef, and drawing clear of the smother the boat reeled down into the hollow, climbed dripping and half-swamped over the back of the next comber, and then slid out on to the smoother heave of open water. They bailed her with the bucket, stepped the mast, hoisted the big lugsail, and rippled all night over a moonlit sea with the land-breeze abeam, until this died out as the red sun leaped up. All day they rowed in weary spells, the swell heaving like oil beneath them and a pitiless sky overhead, while it grew even hotter when towards the evening the sun was hidden in coppery vapour.

"I like not dat," said Rhyner, who held the tiller. "Tornado come she may"; but Kenion pulling stroke-oar answered, "I don't mind if ten come, so long as we board the schooner first."

Seen across the four panting men, who swayed with the oars as the boat rose and fell drowsily to the lift of the sea, a tall cone of dark foliage rose up ahead above the hori-

zon out of drifting vapour. There were strange colours behind it, smoky red and vivid green, and Kenion went through his calculations again as with a crick in his neck he glanced towards it over one shoulder. His hands were raw with rowing, and bled in places, sprinkling red drops on the soaked duck garments that clung to his skin. The perspiration trickled from his hair, but he took his turn and pulled harder than the rest, for according to his reckoning of distances and tides, allowing for a little breeze outshore, the schooner should pass from the other side of that head shortly after nightfall, while if they missed her the current would sweep her out to sea. There were also signs of bad weather, and an open whaleboat is not a good craft to be caught in by a tropical tornado.

It grew darker, and the heat increased. The headland was hidden, though the sea still shimmered about them mysteriously, and an oppressive feeling of coming change pervaded the atmosphere. Kenion, who had now finished rowing, steered by the compass, while Rhyner panted in his stead until a little breeze touched their dripping faces, and a dimly seen line of white surf with black palms rising behind it appeared ahead. Lest the sail might betray them they did not set it, and the Kannakas pulled slowly across the current which set past the island, stretching out into thick obscurity and back towards the surf again. Kenion fumed as, straining his eyes, he wondered if the schooner had passed, while even the phlegmatic Rhyner grew impatient as the time dragged slowly by.

Meantime (according to one of the Kannakas who was subsequently released) Cooper, the free-lance trader, leaned over the tiller of the schooner, *GOLDFINDER*, which vessel bore a

doubtful reputation among the outlying islands of the Southern Seas. Cooper was slightly dazed with liquor, but that only made him obstinate, and he insisted on steering the schooner himself as she stood in towards the reef to gain the strongest tide. It was very dark, and the black canvas slatted harshly as with a dismal creaking of spars the vessel hove her streaming bows clear of the swell, or hardened out with a bang when she listed to a puff of the sultry breeze. Now and then a shimmer of heat-lightning touched the smoke of the spray, and vanished low down on the water leaving a deeper blackness than before. The glow of the binnacle lamp which lights the compass fell on Cooper's face as he bent over it, showing an uneasy look in his blood-shot eyes, while his native wife, an untamed, dusky beauty perched on the swaying taffrail, watched him sullenly. He had beaten her that afternoon, the Kannaka knew.

"I fancied I heard oars again," he said presently. "Don't be so confoundedly sulky, Lola. Can't you hear anything?" But the girl only shook her head, while the white mate, who had differences with the master, laughed sarcastically as he broke in: "You have been hearing all kinds of things lately when they aren't there. The nearest boat is Kenion's, and that's sixty miles away. Better go below and sleep, while I get some of this canvas off her. We're going to catch it by and by, hot and heavy, and the fore-topmast's sprung."

Cooper growled a savage question as to who commanded the schooner, offered to knock down the first to start a halliard without his order, and there was silence again, while the Kannaka sidled closer into the black mainsail's shadow.

"I tell you I hear oars, dipping softly," repeated the skipper. "There—hang the lightning!—Lola, you saw something?" The Kannaka stared at the girl when she sullenly answered, "No," for sitting where she did he felt she must have noticed what caught his eye, a dark bar touched by an evanescent flash drifting towards them ahead. Then he started, as his keen eyes made out two or three streaks of phosphorescence that moved upon the water until they vanished as the schooner swayed down to a puff of sultry wind, while a reverberating roar of ground-sea drowned the gurgle at her bows.

"What was that?" said the mate sharply, when this sank again. "You were right, Cooper, after all." This time a plash of oars came distinctly out of the blackness, with the sound of water lapping about the planks of a boat.

"Ease sheets!" roared the skipper. "I'm not waiting for any boat to-night." The blocks whined, and there was a boil about the quarters when he jammed the tiller up, for the schooner sailed faster as the wind increased. Still, only the Kannaka, and perhaps the girl, saw two wet hands rise up out of the water and clutch at the pressed down channels, and he said nothing. The thud of oars grew sharper, though it seemed that the boat must pass astern of the schooner, and Cooper laughed as he steadied the tiller. The mate had gone forward, and a moment later the Kannaka saw what he waited for,—a naked black man crawl in out of the darkness over the rail followed by another. The skipper's back was towards them: the girl gave no warning; and even as someone shouted a wet hand closed on Cooper's neck and he was hurled down on the stern-grating where two dripping objects rolled over him.

Freed from the restraint of her helm the schooner lumbered up head to wind (which is probably what the wily Rhyner had calculated on when he arranged the plan of campaign), and lay there stationary, her loosened canvas thundering. Then, while the mate and a few white men ran aft, and some of the coloured crew sought for weapons to attack them, there was a crash alongside followed by a rattle of uplifted oars.

"Oop mit you, und gif dem perdition," shouted a breathless voice, and clear in the light of a lantern held up by the mate two white men leaped down from the rail. One was tall and barefooted, clad in dew-soaked duck, the other a burly red-bearded ruffian so far as outward appearances went, but both had rifles, while the dusky men who followed held evil-looking clubs.

"The game's up; give in, and we won't hurt you," said the first stranger, and while for a moment the mate considered the matter the schooner's decks presented a striking tableau. Cooper who had ceased to struggle lay aft on the stern-grating, while a naked man holding his throat in one hand sat upon his chest, and the native girl looked down on him scornfully. The mate, a revolver in his hand, and three white seamen stood about the mainmast heel, while in the blackness under the boom foresail, which slashed wildly to and fro, half-seen Kannakas made ready for a rush on him. The odds were too heavy he afterwards explained, and in a savage voice he said: "We give it up, and I hope I'll see you hanged for piracy. Does your programme include the skipper's murder?"

"Dot vas all right," answered Rhyner. "It vas not us who hang. Kenion, I think he choke dot fellow." Kenion dragged his unwilling retainer away from the skipper who sat up

looking about him stupidly while the trader said: "This is not piracy, only South Sea justice. You will have guessed who I am by now, and I'm going to take the schooner back into Taroika lagoon. Fling those weapons over the rail."

It was done, and hardly had the last one splashed into the sea than with a cry of "Stand by your hal-liards!" Kenion, leaping aside, threw down his rifle. The schooner listed over until one rail was washing in the sea as a sudden blast smote her, and a blinding deluge blotted out everything. Half the crew lost their footing, whirling spray shot up, and through the scream of the rigging there was a crash aloft as the fore-topmast and all attached came down bodily.

"Are you going to smash her on the reef?" somebody shouted when the vessel staggered forward. Kenion fancied it was the mate, and bounding aft he jammed his back against the tiller. He was just in time, for with her lee deck buried in a white welter, and the loosened peak of the mainsail thrashing itself to rags overhead, shovelling luminous water in cataracts over her depressed bows the vessel drove towards the reef, until the helmsman shouted as he jammed the tiller down. She swayed upright suddenly; there was a great rattle of tattered canvas, and it seemed as if friends and foes alike handled the sheets for Rhyner was roaring instructions somewhere. Then she came round on her heel, and leaving the murderous surf a few fathoms behind wallowed off on the other tack, while Kenion gasped with breathless thankfulness. In frantic hurry other men got the canvas off her in time to save the masts, and then under close-reefed foresail they drove blindly out to sea, while Rhyner took precautions against any attempt at recapture.

There was more rain, some vivid lightning, and in half an hour the thunder-gale blew itself out as happens not infrequently in these latitudes; and on the following afternoon Cooper swore viciously as another man steered his vessel once more into Taroika lagoon.

Kenion took him and his white crew ashore, and tried them with due solemnity under the tufted palms overhanging the beach, while two hundred natives, who had expected summary justice, looked on wondering. Many brought clubs with them or canoe paddles, a few had muskets, while all alike appeared determined to take the matter into their own hands should the white ruler show any mistaken leniency. Cooper at first affected to treat the whole affair as a joke; but as the case proceeded with decorum and order, and several Kannakas of his crew threw lurid sidelights upon his character, he grew uneasy, and stirred himself to tell a plausible story. To this Rhyner, who acted as prosecuting counsel, answered grimly: "Der shell und copra she lie on der beach; now she lif in your schooner, und dot thing need much explainings." After this the accused looked moodily out across the sea, until at last Kenion rose to deliver the verdict. "We have given you a fair hearing which on the whole made it worse for you," he said. "If all these tales are true you seem to be a unique rascal. Still, I'm not here to preach you morals, and this is my decision. You will unload the stolen goods, with the others in the schooner's hold as an indemnity to be divided between the men you tried to kidnap. You will also leave the native woman you have systematically abused here to be sent back, as she wishes, to her own people on the first opportunity. And you will sign this paper, admitting the equity of it all."

"It's an outrage," snarled Cooper ; "a travesty on justice no better than open robbery. Suppose I refuse?"

"There is no civilised tribunal within several hundred leagues of us," answered Kenion gravely, "and, somewhat against my will, I am responsible for the good order of this place. I didn't choose the position,—it was forced upon me. You have heard my judgment, and, if you do not like it, you may chose between waiting three months for the gunboat, or appealing to the native law,—in which case I wash my hands of you."

Cooper glanced round at the sea of dusky faces scowling at him, noted the weapons in the sinewy hands, and said savagely : "Under compulsion I submit."

He signed the paper, and Kenion spent an anxious time protecting his unwilling guest until the cargo was unloaded. On the following day Cooper shook his fist in the air, and cursed both Taroika and its ruler, as sliding through the reef-passage he took his schooner empty away.

Many weeks later a little gunboat anchored close in under the palms, and her commander, rowing ashore, said : "Have you been setting up as a pirate, Kenion, since we were here before? I've a charge of something very like it to investigate with you."

"Will you look at this paper?" was the answer. "You will see it is signed as witnesses by two of his crew." The puzzled officer took the paper and read : "I, Henry Cooper,

having stolen the goods specified below and kidnapped ten Kannakas to press into my crew, hereby return the whole of them, with a fair indemnity, and admit that nothing but justice has been demanded of me."

Then having heard the story, and confirmed it by questioning the natives, he laughed and said : "It sounds somewhat high-handed, and I don't know if it's strictly legal ; but I think in the circumstances you did the best you could, and my report will say so plainly. Anyway, it's hardly likely Cooper will press the matter ; he wisely complained by letter. We have one or two other questions to talk over with him, and I heard a rumour he had come badly to grief playing some sharp trick over in New Guinea. And now may I compliment you on your place? Do you know I almost envy you?"

"Yes, it's very beautiful, and I have done my best for them," was the slow answer. "But there are drawbacks, awful loneliness, and other things. Someday something will happen, and then I'll leave it."

The officer asked no questions. He caught the longing in the voice, and understood, for he had heard many strange stories and seen the tragic sequel of several very sad ones during his wanderings in the Southern Seas. As next morning he steamed out to sea he saw the ruler of Taroika standing, a lonely figure, above the hissing surf, and looking after him wistfully.

HAROLD BINDLOSS.

A TYPE OF THE TOWN.

It was a summer's night. The last of the crowd went rollicking along the Edgware Road, shouting not so much through happiness as custom, and the Bystander went after them homewards. The hoarse shouts died away sadly; the pleasure-seekers were tired, their enjoyment was done; in a few hours they would be astir, depressed in the early light, to seek anew for bread and halfpence; there was a final shout, lessening into a gasp, the last moan of a concertina, and the night went to sleep. The Bystander walked towards a smoky yellow light, where he could see a grizzled head dodging up and down like a grotesque marionette; he paused by the few tattered moths that had fluttered towards this light. "Ain't got no tea," replied the proprietor of the stall; "the water don't bile yet." He stroked an urn independently, to test the temperature. "Korfee, Jack, an' a slice o' plain? No," he continued, "tuppence. I ain't goin' to make 'apporths. I can't afford to run no charity restaurant."

"Tuppence takes a deal o' makin' some days; 'tis a lot o' money to part with for a mug an' a slice." Jack, the speaker, stood close beside the Bystander, and the latter looked round, because the accent that underlay the talk of London town was not that of the voluntarily unwashed. He saw a thin man, in a vesture of rags held together with mathematical preciseness by scraps of string, a small face, overgrown with a rough harvest of stubble, but stamped with intellect by keen grey eyes; one foot dragging a heavy boot, wherefrom a

bruised toe peeped pitifully into the night, the other light and fantastic in a once canvas shoe. The hat, jammed upon elfin ringlets, had in the past been of silk, but the period was indefinite. The ancient coat had slipped two paces, so to speak, from the neck; above the collar-bone the skin was fairly clean, even fresh, when it avoided the cross-hatch of wrinkles; beneath this line of demarcation 'twas desolation and dirt. Jack saw the Bystander's glance, and his pride was roused. He put up a well-shaped hand, and shook the refractory garment, even as a terrier worries a rat. The grey eyes were upon the Bystander; their owner leaned forward, and quoted a few apt lines from the chorus of the *ALCESTIS*. "Will yer wait for the tea, sir?" said the voice within. "The water's gettin' on the bile."

The Bystander said that he would wait. Jack edged towards him, and they were alone at the corner of the stall, while the unnamed construed the uncertainty upon his new friend's face, and the sonorous Greek into English prose. "I had forgotten," said the Bystander. "I have neglected the classics since I left Cambridge." He lowered his voice, although there was no need.

"I am from t'other place, as they say in the House, from the banks of Isis—"

"'Old on there, Jack! Where be ye a shovin' to, mate? Yer've bin an' spilt me kawfee."

Jack turned with apologies. "'Orl right, ole pal; 'ave a pull outer mine."

The pal was not overloaded with

pride, and pulled heartily from the proffered mug, until Jack's countenance grew sad. As he turned again, a ragged flap flew forth like a bird of prey, and swept his slice of cake to the gutter. Jack dived, reclaimed the treasure, whisked off the Edgware Road dust, and placed a goodly portion, for security, in his mouth.

"Excuse me," said the Bystander hurriedly. "You were once a gentleman?"

Jack drew himself up with exceeding dignity, and disposed of the cake with a gulp. "I am a gentleman. It is true I have no address and no income. On the other hand, I enjoy perfect liberty, and am not in debt. Can every gentleman say as much? You are looking at my clothes; call them an eccentricity of genius, and look no more."

"'Ere's the tea, sir. 'Ave anythink to eat?"

"Try the seed," exclaimed Jack eagerly. "It's orl right, ain't it, Tommy?"

"Everythink yer buys 'ere is orl right," replied Tommy the proprietor, and the Bystander, submitting, tried the seedcake. "Another slice for me; give us a big 'un," said the Gentleman, his eyes wistful, his mouth hungry. The long knife descended, and a heavy wedge dropped upon the counter. Jack seized it, and with his unoccupied hand worried his garments indefinitely. Presently the rags gathered round him again, and he timidly pushed the slice back. "Beg parding, Tommy; I wouldn't 'ave troubled, if I'd known."

The proprietor turned from serving a cab-driver, and returned the wedge, as though it were a game of shuffle-board. "You're welcome, matey. I knows yer, Jack; to-morrer night'll do."

The Bystander took in the situation, and proffered a sixpence to pay

for both. Jack gave him no direct word of thanks, but turned gratefully, and went on talking. "You see, I don't speak to them as I do to you; they would think me proud. You were assuming that I need a bath? It is true. I had a piece of elastic round the collar of my coat, to keep the garment above the Pillar of Farewell, but I fear the elastic has failed. You do not understand? Each morning I wash me in the Serpentine, and cleanse my face and hands, but never venture below my collar-bone, because I am rheumatic, and dread the touch of cold water. Once a month, oftener when funds run to it, I have a warm bath which costs me twopence net. May I ask what brings you to a coffee-stall?"

The Bystander explained his habit of roaming abroad, and spoke of his interest in the great panorama of London life. He loved to watch the characters that haunt the places of cheap food, to wonder at their light-heartedness, as they struggled in the handicap with the odds so heavy against them, often to admire their fortitude and their actions of unselfishness.

From his companion's conversation the Bystander was given much to think about. Jack belonged to the great army of men who are scattered about London, penniless, destitute, some through their own fault, some through the fault of others. Spoiled by their manner of bringing up, they cannot dig; to beg they are ashamed. They idle about street-corners, waiting, until they are shifted on, to idle about other street-corners; sometimes they are moved on to the Embankment, where, in a dark moment, the habit being perhaps strong upon them, they move themselves on,—one step, and the street-corners know them no more. There are meals to be gathered in the street, the Bystander learned,

sorry sustenance, yet a tight handful of orange-peel and a cigar-stump have often kept life stirring for a few hours. "After all," said his informant, "at the worst it is only a question of a few years. All paths lead to the same exit; it is merely a question of an easy or unpleasant journey." Jack was an optimist, who was cheerful in every circumstance. He had prepared certain rules for his guidance; and such as the following he observed, strange to say, to the strict letter. (1) Never hope, never despair. Take life as it comes, assured that everything occurring is the most fortunate circumstance that could happen. (2) Be prepared for accidents. To check over-population, Providence finds it necessary to remove a certain percentage of the surplus. If you are run over, and maimed for life, do not complain. It has been found that there is no room for you on the streets. (3) For the destitute the Epicurean motto is best; enjoy each hour as much as you can, but never think of the next. (4) When it is too hot, remember that you once found it too cold. When the ground is frozen, don't complain; it must thaw out. (5) Work when you feel well, and do your best, but do not work too hard. (6) Never think of the past; never make plans for the future; always live for the present. (7) Make friends with everyone, but trust nobody. There were more of such rules for self-guidance, but it would be tedious to enumerate the entire code. Jack personally was a literary man, with the artistic temperament well developed. Art, art, what a motley crew of starved and tattered beings are thy disciples! He possessed a reader's ticket for the British Museum, and whenever he could make himself sufficiently respectable, he would bury himself among

the tomes of long-gone thinkers; the results he set down upon paper, supplied as a gift by Government, with an equally gratuitous pen. The day's work would be dropped humbly, for lack of stamps, into the gaping maw of some periodical's letter-box; stamps for the return of the manuscript there were, and could be, none. Wistfully each day the ragged figure crept within the shades of a secluded public-house, where a kindly landlord allowed his letters to be taken in, always with a smile, and the same anxious question, "Anythin' for ole Jack?" Sometimes there was, and the thin face became animated. There were occasional acceptances, and even slips of paper, and these the landlord changed into brave gold sovereigns which he counted generously into the shaking palm. Such days were Periods in a Life.

The Bystander prepared to move away. Half-a-crown lay awkwardly in his hand, and he longed to transfer it, but dared not. It is not easy to offer a gratuity to a gentleman, even though he be homeless and in rags. "May I walk a little of the way with you?" said Jack, when his mug was drained. "I want a move, after standing so long. You will hardly meet anyone you know at this hour. Good-night, Tommy, and thank ye kindly." They moved away, and the voices of the night followed: "Good-night, Jack, good-night, ole boy; take care o' yerself."

"You see," said the Gentleman with his sprightly air, "I am now a London Jack. Once I had a surname, but that is long ago. We do not require handles in my society; identity is nothing. When you look at a drifting cloud, you do not consider that it is composed of many million vesicles. You see the one object, and you give it a comprehensive name. Are you a literary man?"

The Bystander admitted that he sometimes dared to desecrate paper, and Jack went on. "I thought so. Now, were you to introduce me as a character into one of your dramas of real life, you would offend against all the canons of art and nature. You would take me, dress me, and find me, when shaved and in my right mind, a passably handsome fellow. You would find me romantic, and in the end you would marry me to some fair lady of means, and make me a gentleman again. Why?"

He spoke sharply, almost with anger. The Bystander answered, somewhat feebly: "Nature teaches us that the grub becomes a butterfly."

"Nature does not renew the butterfly. Nature does not recolour the flower that has faded. No,—the public are false, you,—pardon me—are false, and I am genuine. You cannot help yourself, because you are a servant of the public. If you speak the true story of life, your books will lie unbought. Why? Everyone has so many troubles, that they shrink from the misery of others, be they real or be they false. Everyone strives to make their troubles less, even to make them appear as things of delight; they will not face them, they cannot; they will not think of them, they dare not. They are false, and their lives are false, therefore they desire to read the false lives of imagined beings. Ah, you turn up here? I will come no further."

The half-crown rolled from the Bystander's hand, and bounded joyously to the gutter. Jack recovered it. "You had better get yourself a bed," said the Bystander.

Jack thanked the donor quietly. "A bed—no! On such a night as this a park-seat should satisfy a Sybarite. I must not stop, or the gates will be closed, and all the seats will be engaged."

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The next meeting occurred in daylight. A sharp wind was blowing through the driving rain. The Bystander hurried along with his head down, until he collided with a gaunt figure, whose tattered garments were soaked, and whose face was shrunk more than usual with cold. "A nice rain," said Jack, when he recognised the bearer of the umbrella. "I don't understand the present necessity for the wind, but the rain is pleasant." He shivered, while the sad water poured through a hole in his hat, dashed upon his nose, and thence to the ground. He resembled a drenched gargoyle perched at the summit of some cathedral tower. "We have had too much dry weather. Rain is badly needed for the streets, the fields, and the race-courses. I expect this cold wind is to keep back the crops; I hear they are too forward this year. We enjoy a hot day so much more after such weather as this."

The Bystander possessed neither Jack's philosophy, nor his happy adaptability. He had already hurled many angry epithets at the weather, and here was Jack, homeless, penniless Jack, walking about in airy rags and shameless boots, and positively eulogising the wind and the rain. The Bystander tried to feel ashamed of himself, and passed away, with the shivering voice behind still quavering, "Yes, a beautiful warm rain."

On an expedition to the national treasure-house in Great Russell Street, the Bystander was fortunate enough to meet Jack, not indeed in the Museum, but proceeding thereto, with brightened eye, from the tavern opposite. Part of the mystery of the Fall became apparent. Jack was gorgeous, not indeed in purple and fine linen, but in some linen, and boots that were partners. He was jubilant. He had come into a fortune, to use his own expression. A review had ac-

cepted an article (written upon government-given paper with the equally gratuitous pen), had published the same, and paid for it, to the extent of twelve golden sovereigns. In cold figures Jack proved his ability to live "in needless luxury" upon twenty pounds per annum; so here was he provided for, at one happy stroke, for the greater part of the twelve months. The Bystander bethought him of the tavern, and sighed for human frailty. "Here is the half-crown, that you were kind enough to lend me on a former occasion," said Jack. "Affluence," he continued, "is surely the root of happiness, as we understand it. Money in the pocket makes the sun to shine, and gives the heart confidence. At the present time I feel that I have a right to a name."

"And a coat of arms," added the Bystander, with a touch of cynicism, but Jack was forgiving, with the forgiveness that cheap brandy brings. He echoed the words. "Why not? Twelve sovereigns or, upon a field azure; in the second, a litterateur, attired vert, once sable, his face sanguine—"

"And nose gules," added the Bystander sharply. "Where are you going now?"

Jack removed his hat, and rubbed tenderly against the decayed nap. "I'm going back to the Reading-Room,—my office, I call it. If I sell one more article, I can retire for this year. I shall buy several pounds of tobacco, walk into the country, and lie in the fields all day."

Some months passed. The Bystander had left London to its dust and sparrows, although he did not spend his leisure consuming nicotine in grass fields. One night in late October he saw the familiar bundle of rags beside the stall in the

Edgware Road, and he came upon Jack, drinking his pennyworth of coffee, and reading by the greasy light of the lantern from a small edition of the *Odyssey*. "Picked it up for twopence this afternoon," he explained. "Lovely night, ain't it?"

The Bystander had not thought so. The wind was biting, and charged with the strange unpleasant odour of the autumn, while now and again came a few great drops of rain.

But Jack was satisfied. "A fresh wind cleanses the place, blows away the germs of disease, purifies the atmosphere by sweeping off the accumulations of carbonic-acid gas." He slapped his hands together, and stamped his feet. "Cold weather is seasonable now. If I choose to go about insufficiently attired, I must expect to feel chilled. The wind is not tempered to the worn-out ram."

The Bystander, not feeling disposed to stand in the cold, asked, "How are you doing?" Jack swallowed the dregs in his mug sadly. "I have lost all my money," he replied, with the air of a man who has been defrauded of thousands. "I could not indulge in my contemplated retirement, after all."

This was the last glimpse that the Bystander was afforded of Jack as an individual; but the class, of which he is a type, remains, and will be always with us. Jack had introduced him to several friends, who foregathered in the shades between Great Russell and New Oxford Streets, grave elderly men, unkempt, but courteous. How politely they raised their hats, gingerly lest the brim should come away! How eloquently they talked, upon every subject, from Sanskrit roots to the latest methods of applying electricity! How interesting they were, sometimes how brilliant, and always how thirsty! There were those who had been beneficed clergymen, school-

masters, lawyers, doctors, and engineers, and not unknown many of them in their day, when they had possessed a name and an individuality. Among themselves they passed by their Christian names; no reference was allowed to the remote past; it was an offence to refer to a comrade as a gentleman, or to remind him that he had ever been a creature of a higher sphere. The Bystander, not aware of this, blundered, but his lesson was taught him by a reverend old fellow, who might have been a general masquerading in rags. "I am not a gentleman, sir. I am a most damnable deadbeat!" Can these men ever dare to sleep? Are they never visited by dreams? Can they even think, without calling up a host of sad pale ghosts—home, wife, child? Perhaps they have drunk of bitterness, until their souls know not of memory. Let us hope so; for the peace of the Great Unnamed, let us hope so.

"Old Jack?" said one of the lost, when the Bystander made an inquiry one winter's day. "Yes, I have missed him of late. Come down here, and we'll ask James." They passed together down the side street, through a door, and into a room that might have been called the Place of Derelicts. The Bystander coughed, because of the fumes of strong tobacco and the sickly odour of stale spirits.

"James, where's old Jack?" James looked up; he was arguing with another wreck, and liked not interruption. "Old Jack? He's gone." James went on with his argument, but when the Bystander asked for enlightenment, he condescended to become more communicative. "Just before Christmas he was taken with pneumonia, and went into the Middlesex. I went to see him, and he explained to me that dying was the very best thing that could happen to him. I dare say he was right. What? Well, thank you. Three-penn'orth of Scotch, please, miss."

The following month the Bystander picked up a magazine, and found therein an article, signed *John Sawyer*; this was the departed Jack's pseudonym. Had that article been published and paid for on the previous month, the author's life might have been prolonged. How he must have craved for that cheque! How disappointed, as month after month slipped away, and the article did not appear! The kindly publican would have received in due course the letter that contained the cheque. He must be waiting, still waiting, for the wistful face at the swing-doors, and the anxious question, "Anythin' for ole Jack?"

ERNEST G. HENHAM.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON AND GEORGE MEREDITH.

"MEN may have rounded Seraglio Point: they have not yet doubled Cape Turk." This saying of Mr. Meredith's most popular, if not his most delightful heroine, might serve as a motto for the new edition of Richardson's novels.

It is not for nothing that Samuel Richardson and George Meredith have found their most appreciative readers among women. Women care for Mr. Meredith because he has thought them worthy of study as distinct personalities. Reversing the dictum of Pope, "Most women have no character at all," reversing the common literary artifice of the masculine scribe, which presents men as men, that is to say, individuals, but women always as Woman, stereotyped in the convention of her sex, he gives us types as various as Lucy Feverel and Jenny Denham, Renée and Cecilia Halket, Janet Ilchester and the Princess Ottilia. He can comprehend that a woman may be capable of a great passion and yet true, in spite of it, to the obligations of station and race, while another woman may yield to passion and yet not be ignoble. A genial comprehension, a sympathy that understands because it respects, underlies his portraits of women. When he professed his ambition to give "blood, brains, to that virginal doll, the heroine," he was not making a vain boast, for his women have both.

Even in delightful new editions, presented with all the attraction that modern print and pictures can lend them, Miss Howe and Miss Byron will hardly exert over our generation

the glamour of Mr. Meredith's women. Richardson wrote for an age when the majority of well-born Englishwomen were incredibly ignorant, and not much more refined than the squires who were their suitors and husbands, and who were carried up to bed drunk by their servants night after night. The contingencies which the heroines of this period habitually contemplate and discuss are never so much as dreamed of by an ordinary girl of our own day; and as for *PAMELA*, which created such a furor on its appearance, the modern girl undergraduate, believing in cold baths and hockey, and ambitious of classical honours, would frankly vote it a nauseous production.

Yet before the modern woman turns up her nose at Richardson, let her consider "the pit from whence she was digged." Let her ask herself whether the revolution in women's education, the changes of public feeling and social custom, which have opened so wide a career to her, were not due in some degree to these novels, which contain so much that conflicts with modern ideas. Why was it that Richardson's works, not only here but all over the Continent, formed a school, and set in motion a new current of ideas, while *TOM JONES*, that masterpiece acclaimed by all competent judges from Sir Walter Scott to Mr. Austin Dobson, had, in comparison, so restricted an influence? Fielding is incomparably the finer writer of English; he abounds in humour, whereas Richardson has no humour at all; he is a moralist, too, in his own way. As a gentleman

and a man of the world, we should naturally prefer his company to that of the fat little tea-drinking printer, pompous and sentimental, surrounded by his devotees. But the fact is that Richardson, ridiculous and narrow as he was, had a touch of inspiration in him that Fielding, his superior in so many things, lacked absolutely.

It is a plausible conjecture that Richardson's experiences as amanuensis of the young women who came to him to write their love-letters may have given him that interest in women, and that comprehension of them, which distinguishes him from his fellows. The average man holds with Mr. Gissing's hero that "a woman ought to be sexual," and does not realise that, even granting this obligation, women may be infinitely diverse in their ways of fulfilling it. Of all the young women who came to Richardson with their stories, no two apprehended love in the same way. And so the truth, so difficult of access apparently to the ordinary male understanding, revealed itself to him,—that women are as various in their individualities as men, that the young man who brags that he knows woman is more likely than not to find himself baffled by some unclassified specimen of the genus,—and that one road to the true understanding of them is to realise that after all they are human as well as feminine, and on the whole more like men than one would suppose.

The conventional conception of women which dominated the minds of Lovelace and his kind has never prevailed to the same extent since Richardson wrote *CLARISSA HARLOWE*. One finds it full-blown, and set forth with persuasive vivacity in Fielding. The women of his books are sharply divided into two classes,—the ladies men marry and the ladies they don't; and one often feels that

accident, more than any inherent quality of nature, is responsible for any given specimen being found in one class rather than another.

Sophia Western is the accomplished type of the "man's woman" of the eighteenth century. She still has her admirers, and far be it from us to hint that she does not deserve them; but one feels that her chief recommendation, to her creator, lay in the fact, to which Mr. Allworthy gives such approving expression, that she possesses "the highest qualification for a good wife,—deference to the understanding of men."

When she learns of Tom's infidelity, it is rather sexual jealousy than moral indignation that moves her. Much less is it the profound pity which noble women feel for the disinherited of their sex. She would probably have thought it indecent to trouble herself about the fate of any of those at whose expense her admirer was gaining experience. The exigencies of convention demanded that Tom should give some promise of amendment before being rewarded with the hand of the heroine, but one cannot help feeling the perfunctoriness of the scene in which he discharges this obligation, and Sophia is not the woman to make it less perfunctory. That she will be an affectionate and, when occasion demands it, an indulgent wife to Tom, we feel assured. We see her in vision, presiding over a nursery of healthy young Britons, sons who will emulate the adventures of their father, in the certainty that when they choose to settle down, there will be Sophias waiting for them also, and daughters brought up to look pretty, sew long seams, and cultivate a proper deference for the understanding of men. The picture is not without its charm, especially for a public which is perhaps rather tired of Ibsen's heroines. It is

homely, unexact, and as reposeful as a portrait by Romney. But in a day when it reigned supreme, some originality, something even of the prophetic spirit, was needed in the man who dared question its absolute adequacy.

And what are we to say of Sophia's father, of his contemporaries and friends? Reflecting on these, we cease to wonder at her unexact temper. Mr. Meredith has a reference in *DIANA OF THE CROSSWAYS* to those "remnants of the pristine male who, if resisted in their suing, conclude that they are scorned and it infuriates them," and to others "whose passion for the charmer is an instinct to pull down the standard of the sex by a bully imposition of sheer physical ascendancy, whenever they see it flying with an air of independence." Such types will always exist, though we may well rejoice that the healthier taste of our own day has deposed them from their pride of place; but when Richardson wrote, they were not only common but admired. The metaphor of the hunter and the chase is irresistibly suggested by the tone of men towards women in the eighteenth century; and the excuse of the foxhunter, who has been known to aver that the fox enjoys a good run in front of the hounds, was made to serve the turn of the "man of gallantry." Naturally also his attitude towards his "conquest," when achieved, was that of one who finds his pastime more in the chase than in the capture. To rob women of their honour, either by "dominating a frailer system of nerves," or by subtler and gentler methods, was not merely, as it has been in all ages, the frequent deed of bad men, but one of the usual distinctions of a person moving in good society. Forcible abductions were not uncommon, and the victims

of these outrages were supposed to be consoled by the tribute implied to "the irresistible power of their charms." That a man in such a case, and uncompelled by the lady's relatives, should make the reparation which Lovelace offers to make to Clarissa was regarded as an amazing stretch of generosity; and it was a puzzle to some of Richardson's readers that he should have represented his heroine as declining the offer, and as rather accepting the intolerable wrong, than consenting to be "made an honest woman of" by her destroyer.

At the same time, there was not much to envy in the lot of the woman who escaped being selected as an object of pursuit. The tone of the day, as revealed in contemporary writings, was a robust and often brutal contempt of the unsought, unmated woman. The current novel possessed one stock figure, to act as foil to the heroine,—the figure of the vain, jealous, and spiteful old maid. She survived into Victorian times, and Miss Bridget Allworthy (but for one unfortunate incident in her career) might claim sisterhood with Charity Pecksniff. The idea of the unmarried woman of mature age as perpetually angling for admiration, perpetually devoured by a sexual jealousy that extended to her most intimate friends, if they happened to be pretty or winning, is constantly to be found in the novels of Dickens, who embodied for the Victorian period, as Fielding did for his own, the genial tradition of the average man.

We can easily imagine what either of them would have made of Letitia Dale in *THE EGOIST*. Letitia is a spinster, decidedly faded, who has cared, and allowed it to be known that she cared, for a man who has flirted with her and thrown her over. When that man brings a younger and

brighter rival on the scene, we might expect some reminiscence of the convention of Fielding and Dickens. But Mr. Meredith never for a moment allows Letitia to appear ridiculous. In her explanation of her position to Clara there is an accent of real dignity. "Ten years back, I thought of conquering the world with a pen. The result is that I am glad of a fireside, and not sure of always having one, and that is my achievement. Last year's sheddings from the tree do not form an attractive garland. Their merit is that they have not the ambition. I am like them." She would have appreciated the good sense and good feeling with which Richardson, in the person of Sir Charles Grandison, discusses the "peculiarly helpless and unprovided state" of single women in his day. The opening of fresh careers for women has reduced the necessity for the "Protestant nunneries" which Sir Charles wished to see established, where "single women of small or no fortunes might live with all manner of freedom, under such regulations only as it were a disgrace for a modest and good woman not to comply with," but the interest of the passage is by no means obsolete.

Another point is suggested by the relations of Letitia with her rival, and other groupings of women which will occur to any reader of Mr. Meredith's work. That two women can be in love with the same man, and be loyal, just, and forbearing to each other; that the loss of youth and charm, and the empire that they give, may be accepted with temper and dignity, are conceptions quite as familiar in modern novels, as they are to the observer of ordinary life. But that they are so, is surely due, in some measure at least, to the influence of Richardson.

"The dear, the excellent Clementina," Miss Byron exclaims when Sir Charles Grandison, after a conscientious weighing of the claims of the two ladies who are candidates for his affections, decides at last to give her the preference. "'What a perverseness is in her fate! She, and she only, could have deserved you.' He bent his knee to the greatly-honoured Harriett. 'I acknowledge with transport,' said he, 'the joy you give me by your magnanimity.'" These are not the manners of our day, and we may feel that Miss Byron overdoes her magnanimity a little; but at any rate her attitude to her rival is to be preferred to any rendering into the language of polite society of the "artful and degrading Tilda" of Fanny Squeers.

We are conscious in Richardson's novels of an interest in women, as women, which was almost an unknown thing in his day. Even Rousseau, himself a bringer-in of the new order, could write thus: "The education of women should always be relative to that of men. To please, to be useful to us, to render our lives easy and agreeable,—these are the duties of women at all times, and what they should be taught." Naturally, therefore, the woman of fiction was not studied in and for herself. She was always grouped in relation to her natural object and lord, either accepting his homage, or running away from his improper advances, or breaking her heart over his neglect, or hating and slandering some other woman for diverting his attention. Of her inner life as a reasonable, self-subsisting human soul, we are shown little or nothing.

Richardson had the courage to break through this convention. His women, in spite of their wretched

education, are interested in a few things besides the hunt for a husband. Clarissa manages a dairy and reads history and theology. Miss Byron can enter intelligently into the good talk on general subjects which she reports to the Venerable Circle. But especially ought women to be grateful to him for this, that he familiarised the readers of his time with a high conception of women's friendship. It may be said that he could not help himself,—that as his stories were told in letters, his heroines must have the necessary confidantes; but surely this is a very inadequate view of the relation, for instance, between Clarissa and her friend,—the petulance, the wit, the mischief, and, permeating all, the unfeigned hearty admiration and devotion on the one side, and on the other, the noble, tender confidence and regard.

It used to be a common thing to depreciate the friendships of women for each other. In youth they were summarised as "schoolgirl nonsense," experiments in sentiment which the first love-affair would put an end to, in maturity as the last resource of a disappointed spinster. Whatever truth there might be in this statement of the case, it was not the whole truth or the truth best worth knowing.

Again, Mr. Meredith helps us to understand his predecessor. Emmy Dunstan and Diana Warwick form a worthy pendant to Clarissa and Anne Howe. One of the ties that unite them, we are bidden to note, is a common interest in the things of the mind. "They were readers of books of all sorts, and they mixed the divers readings in thought, after the fashion of the ardently youthful. . . . The subjects discoursed of by the two endeared the hours to them," though "they were aware that the English of the period would

have laughed a couple of women to scorn for venturing on them."

The heroines of to-day,—and this is something—have licence from public opinion to fraternise in the lecture-room as well as at the milliner's, and "college friendships," perhaps the most delightful and permanent of all, are no longer the exclusive privilege of the stronger sex.

Again and again in Mr. Meredith's books there is the perception of what a woman may owe to a woman. We remember how that blunt Englishwoman, Janet Ilchester, met the Princess Ottilia, and "her first radiant perception of an ideal in her sex." We remember the patriotic comradeship of Vittoria and Laura Piaveni, and that episode when Sandra, an innocent outcast on the London streets, craves pitifully for a woman's arms about her and a woman's tenderness.

Another point is perhaps worth brief notice. Not many readers will now be attracted by those closing chapters of *CLARISSA HARLOWE* which deal with the career and fate of Lovelace's female accomplices. The topic is not a pleasant one, and it is not rendered more attractive by the preaching manner of the eighteenth century. Yet even here Richardson struck a note above the common level of his age, and one which echoes with no uncertain sound in *RHODA FLEMING* and *ONE OF OUR CONQUERORS*. There is the dawn of a social conscience respecting these poor creatures, an impulse of reaction against the general acquiescence in this "ancient tale of wrong,"—the "it always was so and always will be so" of the great careless public—which links the old printer with the more generous minds of the age that followed. The thoughtful compassion which redeems these gloomy pages of

Richardson's novel finds more appealing expression in the pathos of little Kiomi's fate, the redemption of Judith in *ONE OF OUR CONQUERORS*, or Dahlia Fleming's last petition, "Help poor girls." This much, in spite of recent jeremiads, we have surely gained, and that we have gained it is largely due to the writer who, in an age of social and moral decadence, recalled the mind of Europe to a healthier tone of feeling about women.

We must not consider the condition of women from the Dark Ages to our own day as one of unchecked advance. On the contrary, it exhibits a continual fluctuation. Women reached perhaps their highest point of education and influence in the Renaissance; and then their state declined, through the troublous times of the religious wars to what was probably its lowest pitch in the eighteenth century; though we must remember that, even then, France never fell to the level of England. The women scourged by Swift, satirised by Addison, held up to playful ridicule in *THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD*, were very different from the women of Shakespeare and Spenser and Sidney. It was the common cant among the men of that day to call the woman whose charms attracted them a divinity; but there never was a time when love had less of worship in it and more of the brute instincts of passion and vanity.

Thus it was something of a revelation to the mind of that age when Richardson dared to exhibit to it a hero after its own heart, baffled and beaten in the hour of his apparent victory. In the anguish of Lovelace, when he realises that Clarissa's soul has escaped him, that it is "out of his power any way in the world to be

even with her," the difference between mere animal desire and the love which alone is worthy of a human being, compact of flesh and spirit, comes home.

And no change in sentiment, in fashion or manners, can blind us to the grandeur of the conception of Clarissa,—the desolate ruined girl, robbed of all that gives worldly consideration and external support to a woman, banned and outcast in the eyes of the world, no less absolutely that the fault is not her own, is one of the great figures of literature. In *AURORA LEIGH* Mrs. Browning gave poignant expression to the sorrows of another victim of man's brutality; but Marian Erle has her child, and what sustains her in her martyrdom is the passion of motherhood. Clarissa has no help but what she draws from the reserves of her own unconquerable soul. She faces the estranged and scoffing world with a courage worthy of the old Elizabethans,—but it is the courage of meekness, of quiet fortitude, and utmost patience. The magnificent unconventionality which, in an age so dominated by the material and the accidental, could paint a wronged woman radiant and triumphant in a white light of purity, while the successful villain goes mad with longing for the blessedness he has' misknown and forfeited, set Richardson above all the novelists of his own day, and quickened the conscience and sympathy of Europe. His modern successor writes for a public more critical and more impatient, and we may read him without the allowances we have to make for Richardson; yet we may fairly doubt whether *DIANA OF THE CROSSWAYS* and *SANDRA BELLONI* could ever have existed, had it not been for *CLARISSA HARLOWE*.

AN OBJECT-LESSON.

"So, Margaret, you have actually sent them to school!"

The speaker gave her hat the right tilt in the glass as she spoke; behind her Robin lay buried in an arm-chair, deaf and blind to everything except the book in front of him, which he was propping up against a cushion.

"Yes," said his Mother. "Life had become too strenuous. Perpetual mediation between the children and Henriette was wearing me to a shadow. They go to school now every morning."

"Then you are going to honour the frivolous world with an occasional glimpse of your presence, I suppose."

The Mother laughed. "I hope so," she said, "although it will probably not realise the honour. All the same, Kitty, I am going to see more of my friends now, among other things."

"Good!" cried Kitty, clapping her hands, "good! good! good! Come and see *THE FOOL'S FOLLY* to-night! I've made up a party to dine at Prince's and go to the theatre. Do now, there's a dear!—just to inaugurate the new era—isn't that the phrase?"

"I should love it," said the Mother. "I haven't done anything nice for so long. What time do you dine?"

"Early," replied Kitty, "there's no first piece. But look here, why not let me pick you up on the way? Could you be ready by half-past six?"

"Oh yes, quite easily. I have nothing to do this afternoon but just help the children a little with their preparation."

Kitty screwed up her mouth. "Oh, Margaret, Margaret, what a warning

you are to girls about to marry! Well, I can't stay now: I've a hundred things to do. *Au revoir*, don't forget half-past six." As she moved towards the door her glance rested on Robin. "He seems peaceful," she said. "Do you think he is really reading?"

"I should say it was obvious," answered the Mother.

Kitty shook her head. "One never knows," she said; "it's probably only a blind to conceal some new villainy."

Mother was up in arms. "How dare you?" she said indignantly. "He's a darling!"

"Oh I know he's a darling," answered Kitty placidly; "so is the other one; they're both darlings. I can't imagine how you ever found a school good enough for them."

"I didn't," answered the Mother, falling into the trap. "Mrs. Ponsonby found it and she sends Peter there. It's so delightful, a sort of extension of the Kindergarten system, if you know what that is!"

"Of course I know," said Kitty sagaciously. "I went into a Kindergarten once when they were having an object-lesson; it was on the silk-worm, and they were all crawling about on the floor."

"Kitty, you are quite incorrigible," said the Mother. "Be off to your hundred impossible frivolities."

Kitty laughed. "Good-bye" she called out, as she circled down the endless staircase from her friend's flat. "Look pretty and don't be late!"

The Mother went back to the drawing-room with a smile on her lips; it would be very pleasant to her to be, with a good conscience, once

more an irresponsible among the irresponsibles. Of late she had become rather more tied to her children than she either desired or approved, and it was a relief to have the responsibility of their education lifted from her shoulders for the greater part of each day.

Their training was to be conducted by experts whose business it was to fit them for after education by a carefully planned system, by which they were to be taught no mysterious and incomprehensible facts and dates, but to be guided delightfully through the elementary stages of knowledge until they were able to apply the methods they had learnt not only to the routine of the public school but to the problems of life itself. It had seemed a delightful task to their Mother to be able to help at all in a work carried out in such a spirit and with such ideals, and she had joyfully undertaken to superintend their daily preparation. She was turning these things over dreamily in her mind, when the voice of Robin broke into her meditations. "Mother, who was Hector?"

The Mother looked at Robin vaguely; her thoughts could not travel quickly to such a remote personage. "Who was who, dear?" she said to gain breath.

"Hector," repeated Robin, impatiently, tapping the ground with his one available foot, the other being curled under him.

"Hector?" Her voice sounded faint and far-off, but as she went on she gained courage. "Hector was a Greek and a hero,—that means a very brave man. You will read about him some day."

"Thank you. I'm reading about him now."

The Mother took up her needle and began to work vigorously. What was the name of that dusty black

book that had stood in the corner of the study book-shelf at home? Ah yes, she remembered—Smith's SMALLER CLASSICAL DICTIONARY. "I shall write home for it to-morrow," she said to herself.

Before her new needleful of silk had spread itself out, she became aware of Robin's eyes fixed upon her with a puzzled expression. "What is it, dear?" she asked. "Are you reading about something that you cannot understand?"

"Yes, Mother," he replied in a dissatisfied voice; "I cannot understand how Hector was Priam's son if he was a Greek, for Priam was King of Troy, wasn't he? Perhaps it is a mistake though. He may not have been Priam's son at all, or Priam may not have been King of Troy. Do you think it is a mistake?"

"Oh no," said the mother quickly, "it isn't a mistake. I forgot; how stupid of me! Of course Hector was Priam's son and a Trojan. It was the Trojans who made that big wooden horse you know; you will read about that too, some day."

This time Robin laid his book down and stared hard at his Mother. A suspicion began to force his mind uneasily. She was wrong again! Could it be possible that she didn't know it was Grecian cunning that had devised the horse? His mother, meanwhile, drew her needle placidly in and out of her work. If it had been possible, at that moment, for her to have seen Jack outside the nursery cupboard, disembowelled for the occasion and stuffed full of Greek warriors in khaki, she would have realised that he was awaiting the shades of night, when Toby's dolls and the gollywog would steal out silently and pull him into Troy Town, and then such a mistake would have been impossible.

Robin watched the unvarying

needle restlessly. He was burning to gauge his Mother's knowledge of these wonderful new things, which, for a grown-up person, appeared to him to be surprisingly inadequate. Suddenly he spoke. "Mother, what is the French for ornithorhynchus?"

This time Mother had no qualms; she answered smiling and prompt: "My dear child, I haven't the faintest notion."

"Perhaps you know the French for duck-billed platypus?" Robin's voice grew stern. "It means the same thing."

"No, nor that either."

"Well then,—water-mole?"

"No."

Robin kept his grave stare full on his Mother's face; matters seemed to him to be serious. "What a terrible lot of things there are that you don't know about, Mother," he said.

"Terrible!" the Mother confessed. "If you began to count now and went on counting all your life, you wouldn't come to the end."

"Is that true?" asked Robin alarmed.

"As true as you are you and I am I," answered the Mother.

Robin turned away plunged in gloom; his apprehension was realised, for out of her own mouth was she condemned.

"I wonder if that is what Miss MacTavish meant by invincible ignorance," he said slowly.

The Mother absolutely jumped at the priggishness of his manner. The system was growing startling in its effects. "I wonder," she said simply. She had kept her amusement bravely out of her face, but Robin caught the suspicion of a twinkle in her eye and wriggled uncomfortably in his chair; still, in a way she had confessed to invincible ignorance, whereas he had given her credit for omniscience, and it was a rude jolt.

"Mother," he began and paused, his desire to wriggle growing more pronounced and the red mounting to his cheeks.

"Well, dear," said the Mother.

"Couldn't you,—" he stopped again and this time his blushes crept to the edge of his smock—"couldn't you—no one would know, you see—they would think you were a sort of teacher."

"Couldn't I do what?" asked the Mother laying down her work.

"Come with us,—not into the boot-room of course, but just into the schoolroom—to learn about things with the other children?"

It was out now, and he would have given his new paint-box and his pop-gun not to have spoken. His feet had wandered into that bewildering borderland which, in common with all children, he instinctively avoided, the place where mysteries abounded, where people laughed at things that had no humour in them and became of a sudden red with anger at nothing at all, the place that was full of strange hints, wearying complications, and stinging ridicule. He felt painfully lost as, hot and angry, with the tears sparkling on his lashes, he watched the effect of his suggestion on his Mother. Her self-control had completely given way and she was laughing with tears (such different tears) in her eyes, for the self-sufficiency of the small mite seemed to her to be so tremendous.

At last the situation became intolerable and Robin spoke. "Don't, Mother," he said, kicking the chair, "don't, don't, it's horrible of you!"

Then the Mother paused and her laughter gave way under a sense of compunction, for Robin turned from her, letting fall those insistent drops called up by her ridicule. She threw away her work and opened her arms.

"Dear love," she cried, "what a wicked cruel Mother you have got! There, there, she will never laugh at you again! Come and sit on her lap and talk about wisdom."

After tea the children came in to do their preparation. The Mother looked at the clock; it was half-past five and Kitty was coming at half-past six; she had to dress, but she decided to get their lessons well started before leaving them to their own devices and Henriette. She took her seat at the end of the table and opened the little black book in which was written the list of subjects for daily preparation. *Write object-lesson*; as her eye fell on the phrase she thought of Kitty's silkworms and smiled. "Now then, children, you had better begin with your object-lesson; at least Robin had; I will give Toby something else to do. Be quick, Robin dear," she said, pushing his exercise-book and a pen across the table to him.

"What am I to do?" asked Robin picking up the book.

"Do? Why, write down all you can remember of your object-lesson to be sure."

Robin looked blankly in front of him. "But I don't remember anything about it at all," he said. "I,—I don't think I could have been paying attention."

"But, my dear," said the Mother, "you must remember what it was about. Come now, think."

Robin contorted his face and stared first up at the ceiling and then at the floor and then out of the window. He wriggled, and twisted his feet round the legs of the chair, and rubbed his fingers on his hair but all to no purpose. "If you could give me a hint of how it began, I could go on," he said.

"But I can't give you a hint, I wasn't there," said the Mother. "Can

you remember what the object-lesson was about, Toby?"

"No," said Toby sorrowfully, "I can't remember; I couldn't have been paying attention either. Perhaps it was leaves. Was it leaves or teeth, Robin? Don't you remember 'What are the three ways of using your teeth besides eating?'"

"No." Robin shook his head. "It wasn't teeth; we did that a long time ago and it wasn't leaves either, for it was only yesterday that I was thinking how funny it was that leaves should have stomachs."

"What, dear?" asked his Mother in surprise.

"Stomachs," said Robin. "I think it was stomachs that Miss MacTavish said,—anyhow that is what I wrote down."

"Have you got the book there?" asked the Mother in some bewilderment, forgetting the need of haste in her curiosity. "Can you find the place?"

"Of course I can," answered Robin briskly turning over the pages of his exercise-book. "Here it is! 'Leaves have a large surface for their size. The stomachs are found at the back of the leaf.'"

"*Stomata!*" exclaimed Mother suddenly with dawning comprehension.

"*Stomata!*" repeated Robin after her as though it were a password,—
"why?"

The Mother was non-plussed; there appeared to be no answer to such a question. Robin continued, "What a funny word, Mother! What does it mean?"

"You had the object-lesson, Robin," answered his Mother severely, "I hadn't. If you don't understand it now, you had better ask Miss MacTavish to explain it to you. I haven't time to teach you botany. Come along, we really must get on quicker."

"But I *do* understand all Miss MacTavish says," returned Robin offended. "It is only—"

"Perhaps," interrupted Toby pleasantly, a smile illuminating his face, "perhaps the lesson was on picklesticks."

The Mother's fingers beat an impatient tattoo on the table. "Children, children," she said, "we have no time to talk. What are picklesticks, Toby?"

"You said that we hadn't any time to talk," answered Toby sulkily, "and now you talk yourself."

"Answer my question."

"Well, now," answered Toby gravely, "if you were building a nest in a pond—"

The Mother leant back with a jerk; at that moment she would have welcomed the Mad Hatter for a little relevant conversation. Robin put his hand over hers soothingly. "He means sticklebacks, Mummy dear; he only calls them picklesticks. You know that sticklebacks always—"

"Robin," said his Mother in even tones, the result of successful self-repression, "we have no time to talk. Write *Object Lesson III* at the top of the page."

Robin clutched his pen and in slow upright letters did as he was told. "What next, Mummy?" he asked with imperturbable good-humour. "I've written that ever so nicely."

"Well, what is the object-lesson about?"

"That's just what we don't know! Aren't you going to tell us? Whatever was the good of beginning it at all if you don't know either? I can't write an object-lesson that *nobody* knows!"

The Mother groaned inwardly. The hands of the clock were moving inexorably onwards; more than twenty minutes had passed and the little hand was near the hour. "I shall never see *A Fool's Folly* at this rate," she

thought; "not outside of my own flat at all events."

Suddenly Toby withdrew his eyes from staring into vacancy, and fixed them on his Mother. "I've remembered Mummy," he said, "I've remembered! Volcanoes!"

"Volcanoes!" exclaimed Robin, "truly? Shall I write down volcanoes, Mother?"

The Mother hesitated. "Well really, I don't know," she said. "If you don't remember a word of the lesson, what you write won't be your own composition, will it?"

"What's composition?"

"Well, your own make up, your own words, your own ideas."

"Oh yes, it will," said Robin cheerfully. "I shall remember my ideas directly Toby tells me them. I'm beginning to remember now. Go on Toby! What about volcanoes?"

"Well," said Toby sententiously, "the inside of the earth is very hot and volcanoes connect with it."

It sounded promising. The Mother took heart of grace as she heard Henriette putting out her evening things; at the same time her eyes avoided the clock.

"How do you mean?" asked Robin, biting the end of his pen.

"I shall have to begin at the beginning," answered Toby gravely, "and if you will sit very quiet, I will tell you about it. It is *most* interesting."

"Pooh, you needn't think such an awful lot of yourself, because you happen to have been listening! It's just a fluke that I didn't hear as well as you."

"The beginning is that once upon a time the earth was a little bit of the sun," said Toby ignoring his brother's remarks. "Do you understand, Robin?"

Robin nodded.

"Well, one day the earth got wriggled off because the sun went

on twisting about and going on,—from hotness I suppose. Do you understand, Robin?"

Robin nodded again. "It was boiling perhaps," he said.

"Yes," answered Toby. "It was boiling and the little bit was boiling too; but the little bit was such a teeny weeny little bit, that its outside soon got cold, and then God made the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve."

"What a funny object-lesson, Toby," said Robin, looking at his brother doubtfully. "Are you sure that—"

"Be quiet! You said that you didn't remember a word about it. I'm going on. The inside, you see, didn't matter to Adam and Eve any more than it does to us, so it went on boiling and it goes on boiling now and when it over-boils it squirts up stuff, and that's volcanoes."

"How do you spell volcanoes, Mother dear?" asked Robin, preparing to write down all the information he had just received.

But the Mother didn't answer; she was turning over the leaves of the note-book with a puzzled expression on her face. "I can't make it out at all," she said. "I have been looking at Friday's preparation and to-day is only Thursday. You don't have your object-lesson until to-morrow morning."

"Don't we?" said Robin, opening his eyes. "Then that was why I couldn't remember it."

"But why in the world didn't you tell me that I had made a mistake instead of behaving in that idiotic way?" asked the Mother sharply.

"We didn't behave in an idiotic way," answered Robin indignantly. "You said 'Write down *Object-Lesson III.*' and I wrote it down; and then you said 'Try and remember what it was about,' and I tried to remember what it was about; and I couldn't

because it wasn't about anything, because we didn't have it."

"Then why did Toby talk all that nonsense about volcanoes? Really, you are quite hopeless; I give you both up!"

"Then you are a wicked Mummy," said Toby gravely.

Mother threw back her head and laughed, and as she did so, she saw that there was only ten minutes left of her time. The laugh died on her lips, but she resigned herself to the inevitable with a good grace.

"Tell me, Toby dear," she said, putting her arm round the little boy, "why did you tell that long story?"

"I was remembering," said Toby; "you told me to try and remember something, so I remembered volcanoes."

"But why did you say it was an object-lesson, when you never had an object-lesson at all?"

"I didn't," said Toby; "you said that, or Robin, I forget which, but I thought that perhaps it was. You see, I had forgotten how I had heard about volcanoes and I had forgotten the object-lesson, so two forgettings made one remembering. Do you see, Mother?"

The Mother shook her head. "I'm afraid I don't," she said.

"I know how you heard about volcanoes, Toby," said Robin. "It was the geography-lesson of the first class and you were standing in the corner being punished for fiddling."

"Of course it was!" said Toby brightening. "I remember now. I'm so glad that I remember! it was such a lovely lesson."

"I should like to have heard all that about Adam and Eve," said Robin contemplatively.

"Oh that wasn't there at all," put in Toby quickly. "I thought of that all myself. Miss MacTavish doesn't like Adam and Eve or Abraham or

any of those people one bit. Mother, why doesn't Miss MacTavish—"

There was a sharp ring at the door, followed almost immediately by the apparition of a pink cloud of frills and chiffon.

"Well!" The pink cloud shook itself and Kitty,—an indignant Kitty—burst forth. "Upon my word, Margaret, you are too bad!"

She took in the situation at a glance, and, although not very much surprised at any new eccentricity displayed by her friend, was for the moment exceedingly wrathful.

The Mother, finding that her apologies were taken out of her mouth, was quietly ruling lines with a pencil.

"You are an unreliable woman, Margaret!"

"I am very sorry, dear; I cannot tell you how much I have wanted to come," answered the Mother, laying down her pencil. "But look, you see it is impossible. There is not the slightest use in my sending the boys to school if they don't prepare their lessons every day, is there?"

"Haven't they nearly finished the horrid things?" cried Kitty.

"They haven't begun," answered the Mother, half laughing and half crying. "They have been combating windmills in the shape of an object-lesson that didn't exist."

Kitty put her hand up to her head. "You are very confusing, Margaret," she observed; then her righteous anger blazed afresh. "Oh, it's sickening, and so ridiculous! I never, in all my life, heard of any woman going on as you do! I did think that you would have reformed when you had found a school, but really it seems to have made things worse. Oh why, why, why couldn't you have sent them to a common ordinary school without a system?" She paused for breath and then continued solemnly: "I think you are mad, Margaret!"

That is the only way that it can be accounted for. Detestable little children, why have you made your mother go mad?"

The air became electric as Robin and Toby stared open-mouthed from Kitty to Mother and then back from Mother to Kitty. At last the storm broke; they could bear the strain no longer and simultaneously as the paroxysm seized them, they opened their mouths and roared.

Kitty caught hold of the Mother's two hands, pulling her out of the room and then shut the door firmly behind them and the noise.

"There, there, I'm disgraceful. Goodness how they yell! But listen now, Margaret, you *must* come. If you are too late for dinner, go on and meet us at the theatre. I will leave word at the box-office. If you don't come, I shall think that you are angry with me, but truly, it was for your own sake, as much as anything, for if you shut yourself up like this perpetually, I won't be answerable for the consequences."

The Mother leaned forward and kissed her. "Thank you, dear, of course I understand. I'll come if I can. Good-bye."

"No no, not good-bye," cried Kitty, stamping her foot, "*au revoir*! You just knock those two polished corners off to bed and be a good, happy, sane woman again."

As the Mother opened the door, both the children flung themselves upon her. "Mummy darling, Mummy darling, we're not making you mad, are we?" "You won't have to go and live among the tombs like the man in the Bible!" "Or wrap yourself in a sheet and carry a bell!" "Oh, say that you are not mad, and say that you love us, and say that we are not naughty, and say that Auntie Kitty is a horrible woman!"

The Mother gently disengaged her-

self from the clinging little fingers. "No, dears, I'm quite in my right mind, make yourselves easy; if you get on with your preparation you will be good boys. Auntie Kitty didn't understand; you see Auntie Kitty hasn't got any little children." She once more took her seat at the end of the table. "Now then, let us go on and be quite sure this time that we have got the right lesson. *Thursday, geography*: what geography have you got to do, and where is the book?"

"Oh, we don't have a book," said Robin; "we never have a book. We have to make gummy islands."

"Gummy islands!" repeated the Mother.

"Yes," explained Toby; "we trace an island out of the atlas, and then we gum it all over, and after that we cover it all up with sand, and the sand sticks! It's a lovely play!"

"What island have you to make for to-morrow?"

"New Guinea," cried both the children promptly.

The Mother's heart felt a little lighter; it was so much easier to do one's duty when one had something definite to go upon, and New Guinea certainly existed. "Get the atlas," she cried gaily. The atlas was produced, also pens, pencils, tracing-paper and gum. "Do you write in the places?" asked the Mother, studying the map.

"I'm not quite sure about the places," answered Toby; "but we have to put in the birds and the trees and the coal and the diamonds and the people and the manufactures and the fishes and—"

"Not the fishes, Toby," said Robin.

"Oh yes, I'm quite sure that we have to put in the fishes," insisted Toby. "I don't care what you do, but I shall put in my fishes."

"Where is the geography-book where we can find all this informa-

tion?" asked the Mother, putting down the map and turning Robin's knapsack inside out in search of it.

"Book?" cried Robin. "Oh we don't get it out of a book. Miss MacTavish hates books; you've got to tell us."

"When you do geography with me," replied the Mother sternly, laying down the knapsack, "you put the places, which you copy out of the atlas, into your maps and not another word about anything else."

"Mayn't I put in even a bird of paradise?" asked Robin gloomily.

"No, I won't make myself responsible for even a bird of paradise," answered the Mother. "If Miss MacTavish told you about a bird of paradise, put him in; if she didn't, leave him out."

"Well she did, then," answered Robin; "New Guinea abounds in birds of paradise."

"Come, come, begin!" said Mother.

"Have you got everything now?"

"We haven't got anything."

"Nonsense, here is tracing-paper, pen, ink, and gum; what more do you want?"

"Sand," answered Robin.

"Oh yes, Miss MacTavish said that we were to ask cook for the sand," put in Toby.

"Sand!" echoed the Mother.

"Silver sand; I told you so; but all cooks have silver sand, Miss MacTavish says."

An idea was floating nebulously in the Mother's mind and as she went to the bell, it began to take form and substance.

"Ask cook for a little silver sand in a basin, Ann, please," she said in a slightly constrained voice to the astonished parlourmaid.

Matters had been pushed too far and she began to feel that life, with a system, was more wearing than life without one. "I will see Miss Mac-

Tavish to-morrow at any rate," she murmured to herself. "I will *not* undertake this kind of work."

She was deep in thought when the door opened and Ann again stood before her. "Please Ma'am, cook says that there isn't a grain of silver sand in the house."

"Oh well, that settles it!" said the Mother decidedly. "You may go now, children. There is no more preparation to-night."

"You mean that there is *no* preparation to-night, Mummy dear," said Robin, gathering up the pens and exercise-books. "We haven't had any yet, have we?"

The Mother looked at the clock. "No," she answered, "you are quite right. We have just spent one whole hour and a half in doing nothing at all."

"Oh, well, we are going to do something now," cried Toby, capering off into the nursery. "Come on, Robin, let's dress up and have a play!"

"Nothing of the sort," cried the Mother briskly, as she rang for Henriette. "You are going to bed, my dear little sons. It's my turn now; I am the person who is going to dress up and have a play."

"You, Mummy!" cried both the boys in amazement. "You dress up!"

"Certainly," said Mother. "Why not? You want to keep all the fun to yourselves."

"But—but—it's so queer! We ought to, for we are boys, you see, and you—you are a Mother."

"I know," said the Mother ruefully, "that's just it!"

THAT STRAIN AGAIN.

A LONELY sound awakes me, long
Before the coming of the light,—
The storm-cock's rich imperious song
Dropped from the lime-tree's leafless height.

Divinely sweet those matins ring
Amid the dark, and winter's dearth;
It is the Orpheus of the Spring
Calls the Eurydice of Earth.

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH AND THE COLONIAL REFORMERS.¹

Mrs. Fawcett has done a good service in giving us a biography of Sir William Molesworth, the Cornish baronet who, living at the beginning of the Victorian era, became one of the leading lights of that interesting but rather heterogeneous band of enthusiasts known as Colonial Reformers, or Philosophical Radicals. The whole movement was complicated, and arose from a variety of causes. In one sense it reflected those political and social ideas which were the natural corollary of the Reform Bill of 1832; in another it was a Party protest against the nerveless policy of the Whigs of the day who, as politicians, did not seem to have the courage of their opinions, and, further, it was a protest on behalf of British colonisation and the best methods of settling a new country. The names of Lord Durham, John Stuart Mill, Roebuck, Hume, Grote, E. G. Wakefield, Charles Buller, as well as that of Sir William Molesworth, amply illustrate this diversity of aim. History, philosophy, social science, philanthropy, colonisation, all had their expounders at the hands of this brilliant coterie.

For the moment we are more concerned with their ideas on colonies and colonisation, especially as we now seem to be reaping a full harvest of colonial loyalty and colonial patriotism. At certain stages of our national history it may not be altogether an idle task to count up results and assign proper causes, and if we can

trace the present contentment in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand back to the clear principles enunciated by this band of Colonial Reformers, then we are upon fruitful ground.

It is not necessary to look back very far to understand how hard was the task of Colonial Reformers in the early days of Queen Victoria. The Colonial Office itself had long been in a hopeless state of departmental confusion. In 1802 colonial affairs had been attached to the War Office, Lord Hobart having been the first Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, a conjunction of irreconcilable offices which actually lasted to the Aberdeen Ministry, when the Duke of Newcastle was the last Minister who held the two offices together. The new era might practically be said to have commenced with Sir William Molesworth, who was appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies alone in July, 1855, under Lord Palmerston's Government, an office he was spared to hold only a few months, but which was a fitting climax to his career. The inconveniences of the double office, which Sir William did so much in his character as a Colonial Reformer to demonstrate, were also made clear in a debate raised by Sir John Pakington in 1855, in the course of which, to use his own words, "a state of public business hardly decorous" was revealed; while the Colonial Office itself was described in a witty apothegm of Lord Derby's as "The office at War with all the Colonies." At certain stages, no doubt, of our colonial history a military governor is required, especially

¹ LIFE OF THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH, BART., M.P., F.R.S.; by Mrs. Fawcett. London: 1901.

in the case of native wars and complications; but the sooner he retires in favour of a civil administrator the better. As recently as 1881, when Sir Owen Lanyon was appointed Administrator in the Transvaal after the first annexation, the mistake was made of introducing a military *régime* when a civil commissioner of approved experience would certainly have been more acceptable. In the future settlement of South Africa the best hand, surely, will be not the hand that has descended, justly and rightly as we think, in the form of a mailed fist, but the hand of the trained civilian. When Lord Bathurst was at the head of colonial affairs under the old *régime* his parting words to a colonial governor going on his distant journey were, "Good bye, my good fellow, good luck to you, and let us hear as little of you as possible." The words are harmless enough in themselves, but in combination with many other proofs they may be interpreted as revealing a carelessness and indifference to colonial affairs characteristic of the gentlemen who sat as Secretaries of War and the Colonies. So far as the Whigs were concerned there was little real enthusiasm for our colonies, few indications that they recognised their value or courted their loyalty. They accepted blindly the axiom of Turgot that colonies were like fruit, destined to ripen certainly on the parent stem, but then to fall to the ground and begin an independent growth. Political economists and financial reformers all combined to give evidence against the colonies. In 1830 Sir Henry Parnell (Lord Congleton), the Chairman of Mr. Canning's Parliamentary Finance Committee, proposed to get rid of Ceylon, Cape Mauritius, and our North American colonies at one fell swoop, it being clear to his mind that the public desired no commercial advan-

tage from them which it might not have without them. The history of the colonies, he maintained, was for many years a history of losses and of the destruction of capital. It must be remembered also that so late as 1865 a Parliamentary Committee advised giving up all our colonies in West Africa.

Sir William Molesworth's first object was to ameliorate the condition of the convicts, and in 1837 he moved for a Select Committee on Transportation. In 1851 he made his last speech in Parliament against the system, and so for sixteen years this especial department of home and colonial reform engrossed his earnest attention. At this period of our colonial development it is almost impossible to grasp fully the evils of the convict-system as it existed at the beginning of the Victorian era. The reformer of this evil, which had to be grappled with and remedied before the purity of colonial life and the capacity of the colonists for self-government could be in any way asserted, ran counter to the opinions of those politicians and economists at home, many of them working in the character of social reformers themselves, who really thought that transportation for crime was not only a strong deterrent of crime in itself, but also an easy way of relieving existing pressure upon the prisons. The initial cost, it was argued, of transportation to Botany Bay was calculated at about £30 a head, but this was the first and last expense. Mr. Cunningham, in some well-known letters from New South Wales, put the economical argument thus: "Every rogue whom you retain at home takes the bread out of the mouth of an honest man; as long, therefore, as England cannot keep her honest poor, so long will it be to her interest to turn all her roguish poor out of her bosom to thrive else-

where." In 1828 there were upwards of four thousand convicts on board the hulks employed on the dockyards and other public works at an annual expense of £60,000, and the whole of these would be turned loose upon society in seven years. How much better, therefore, was it to transport them! Starting life under new conditions the convicts had a better chance of being reformed and, as time went on and they accumulated property, of becoming decent members of a society less permeated by traditions and distinctions of class than that at home.

It certainly seems true that French publicists in the time of Napoleon looked upon the British schemes of transportation as illustrated in Botany Bay in the light of sound experiments in political economy, and the French Imperial Institute of the day reported favourably upon it. Indeed, the French themselves for long had their eyes upon New Zealand as a promising place for a penal colony. Had transportation been in any way systematised, or the welfare of the convicts considered in a proper spirit, it is quite possible that it might have continued to exist a generation or so longer in the history of our colonies. But a reference to the proceedings of the Molesworth Committee disclosed such an abominable and infamous state of things that it stood condemned at once. The wonder is that it continued so long, the fact being that prison-reform at home, the alternative to transportation, was a plant of remarkably slow growth. How slow it was we may infer from the pages of Charles Dickens, Charles Reade, and many other writers. Another obstacle was found in the attitude of the colonists themselves. In a new country like Australia labour was scarce, and convicts supplied the want. Why then should

a supply of labour be stopped which at first sight seemed to benefit both the mother country and the colonies at one and the same time? It was really extraordinary to notice how determined statesmen at home were to shut their eyes to the depth and degradation of the moral evil. They never could understand that the colonists would ever regard convicts in any other light than an unmixed blessing, and so in 1848-9, when the Cape colonists forming themselves into an Anti-Convict Association, refused to supply the two hundred and eighty-two convicts on board the *NEPTUNE* with meat or bread, Earl Grey (an excellent statesman in his way) rubbed his eyes with astonishment and wondered why he had been so grossly misinformed about the strength of colonial opinion.

The play of Party-politics, then as now (for herein lies some advantage in studying Mrs. Fawcett's book) stood in the way of a right colonial policy and the consolidation of the British Empire. Sir Spencer Walpole in his *HISTORY OF ENGLAND* (iii., 414), remarked that very little came of Roebuck's Committee to enquire into the claims of the Canadian colonists, because "Whigs and Tories in England took a much more immediate interest in the crises which were destroying the Whig ministry than in the agony of a distant colony." Surely here is a notable plague-spot of contemporary English politics. *Mutatis mutandis*, it seems at the present moment as if the motley assortment of political units known as the Pro-Boer Party at home cared far less for the real welfare of South Africa than for their own petty designs, and their infinitely small electioneering ambitions. Patriotism has disappeared in the ranks of one Party in the State

exactly when it was most needed in the very throes of a national peril. In the days of the Canadian revolt the public danger was small and insignificant contrasted with that which has recently hung over the issues in South Africa. In Canada there were never any perils arising from complications in Europe, but in the case of South Africa we have gone "upon the edge of the razor." Colonial volunteers, who have fought for our existence and prestige as a nation in South Africa, and have known from actual experience how much has been really at stake, have imbibed deep and lasting ideas upon the unspeakable degradation of Party-life in England, which has ended in vilifying our army and besmirching our reputation in the eyes of Europe. Can they ever respect this Party-life in the mother country? The answer lies in the implied, if not open, rebuke of Mr. Seddon in New Zealand.

There is yet another point for our instruction arising out of the Canadian crisis of 1837-8, and this is suggested by the action of the Colonial Reformers themselves who, it must be understood, were not invariably right. Like all men struggling to the light they sometimes made mistakes. In the sixth number of the *LONDON AND WESTMINSTER REVIEW*, a journal under the especial direction of Sir William Molesworth and John Stuart Mill, there appeared an inspired article on "The Radical Party and Canada." Allusion was there made to a notable split between the Radicals and the Whigs, the former organising themselves into a separate party and going into open and declared opposition to Lord John Russell; and the opinion was openly expressed that in the history of North American colonisation the name of a Whig would be as infamous as that of a Tory in Ireland. Further, the main

features of the revised Radical programme were stated to be "the Ballot, justice to Ireland, justice to Canada." It is needless to point out here that, at the time of the Canadian crisis, the Colonial Reformers were, from a Parliamentary and also from a public point of view, a very weak Party. Judging from a test division in 1836, when the House was asked to declare that it was against its own dignity and independence to have a paid Canadian agent, like Mr. Roebuck, the Whigs, assisted by the whole weight of the Tory Party, rejected an amendment brought forward by Temple Leader, member for Bridgwater, by three hundred and eighteen votes to fifty-six. It is clear that the Colonial Reformers did not strengthen their position by confusing home and colonial issues. There might have been and, no doubt, there were, some Whig and Tory members who would have preferred to listen to a clear statement of the case for Canada without any allusion to the ballot or Ireland. Supposing for a moment that the particular question of electing a Legislative Council for Canada, and not nominating it, was before the House, what profit could there be in making the decision part and parcel of a policy which endorsed, say, Roman Catholic Emancipation in Ireland? Again, it must be remembered that in 1836 Sir William Molesworth in company with Grote, Hume, Leader, and Roebuck had formed an Anti-Corn Law Association. The fact is that the whole sphere of home questions should have been kept distinct from colonial issues. It was not exactly the fault of the Colonial Reformers that both were confused in one general programme. It was the fault of our Party-system, and we seem to be more deeply entangled than ever in it at the present moment.

The case of Canada looked very hopeless for a long time until Lord Durham was sent as a kind of "unemployed Cæsar" to report upon it, aided and guided by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and Charles Buller. We know the sequel. The Report itself was excellent, but Party politicians at home did their best to discredit its author and drive him to resignation. Lord Durham had the boldness to grapple with the situation and to deal firmly with rebellion. Vilifiers and traducers said that he had surrounded himself with his own advisers, that he had sentenced prisoners to transportation to Bermuda whither his commission did not extend, and that he had threatened death to the leaders of the rebellion if they returned. His case was really to some extent like that of Governor Eyre, and also like that of Sir Bartle Frere, both officers of the Crown who were suddenly summoned to deal with rebellion, the former with the Jamaica rioters and the latter with the rebel Gaika and Galeka clans in Kaffraria. It is strange now to think that Lord Durham had the support of the Philosophical Radicals of the day, while Sir Bartle Frere drew down upon his head the vials of Radical wrath. All these officers of the Crown were sacrificed at the time and commended afterwards. In the Canadian imbroglio John Stuart Mill presents rather a curious study by the light of latter-day Radicalism. In the article in the *WESTMINSTER REVIEW* already alluded to, and supposed to express his views as well as those of Sir William Molesworth, Lord Durham is speeded on his errand to Canada: "The whole institutions of the two great Provinces were prostrate before him and Canada was a *tabula rasa*. The dictatorship of which Lord Durham was the depositary admitted of justification; for when a country was divided into two parties

exasperated by the taste of each other's blood, an armed Umpire with strength to make himself obeyed [this sounds very much like the "prancing proconsul" of latter-day Radicals] was a blessing beyond all price. Such a mediator it behoved the mother country to be." Evidently, the Philosophical Radicals of early Victorian days approved of strong measures and a firm hand.

Here again it may be noted that the very arguments which were held to apply to Canada in 1837 may surely hold good in South Africa to-day, all the more because the general situation there is more critical. Instead of Lord Durham there is Lord Milner, and "the institutions of two Provinces lie at his feet." The moral is to give him a free hand, if we argue from the Canadian analogy and apply it literally. It is the general fashion in some quarters to prescribe the Canadian example as the cure for South African evils. Certainly, we may say, only adhere to it step by step. Suspend the constitutions first, and then, as Baron Sydenham of Toronto, "the merchant pacificator" of Canada, showed us, introduce gradually representative institutions as well as reforms in finance and education before giving the complete boon of responsible government. In the very unedifying game of Parliamentary ping-pong,—to adopt a simile not wholly out of keeping with the levity and recklessness with which colonial issues are bandied on this side and on that—the colonists themselves may not unnaturally murmur

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur
Achivi,

and long to be freed altogether from the yoke. Herein lies one of the great dangers awaiting our Empire

in the future. Probably few politicians at home realise in the least how inexpressively futile and irksome the proceedings of the House of Commons are to the colonists. They cannot be expected to have the same ingrained respect for it as an institution with its roots deep down in the history of the past. They compare it with their new Assemblies and weigh its merits as a body of legislators summoned "to despatch business," and they find it wanting. Some years ago a well-known and prominent burgher of the late Orange Free State was asked to express his candid opinion as to the advisability of federating with the Cape Colony and Natal and so of coming under the folds of the British flag. The old Dutchman, after brief reflection, replied that he had no objection to come under the British Crown and the British flag, but that he had every objection in the world to come under the House of Commons at Westminster. After the experiences of the past he felt quite sure that the interests of the Orange Free State would not receive the reasonable and enlightened treatment they deserved.

The position is shown very well in a letter written by Wakefield, to Mr. G. W. Young the father of Sir F. Young, dated December 29th, 1849.

I agree with you that there is a chance that the Protectionists may throw out the Government, get into power and try what a dissolution may do for them. But by what means? Certainly not by a motion in favour of Protection. That cock won't fight in the present House of Commons, except to be beaten flagrantly. Then by what means? By no other than defeating the Government on a Colonial motion. By that means Protection may get an appeal to the country and see what strength there is in it. . . . But the game is, in great measure, in your hands, because you are a known colonizer and Colonial Re-

former—almost the only leading Protectionist who is.

Upon another occasion Wakefield would be glad to form a society composed of men of all Parties for the reform of colonial government, as if, for an interval, he were breathing a better atmosphere, which was soon to be tainted when, again, in a letter to C. B. Adderley he writes (December 7th, 1849) that Molesworth's adhesion to the Colonial Government Society will involve Cobden and the Free Traders. What a hotch-potch of politics, we can but cry, what a mixture of diverse interests! No doubt it was Wakefield's object, as well as that of other Colonial Reformers "to carry into real and not pretended effect the principle of Representative and truly Responsible Government for the true Colonies." The exigencies, however, of Parliamentary life and the claims of Party adherents had to be considered, and while Wakefield wrote to Molesworth to work in organising "a sort of Colonial Reform party which should be ready to act on the very first day of the Session," he had to enlist those as supporters who did not see eye to eye with him on questions of trade. The Colonial Reformers in their extremely complicated task had to catch at straws, and we can hardly wonder at their failure as a composite political Party.

The most untiring genius of all was undoubtedly Wakefield, and when in 1898 the British Association met at Bristol the Honble. W. Pember Reeves, Agent-General for New Zealand, made a great point of his services to the British Empire. He took a great share in the successful adjustment of the Canadian difficulty under Lord Durham; he was mainly instrumental in abolishing the convict-system; he helped by his energy to

bring about colonial self-government; he saved New Zealand from falling into the hands of France, and he was the virtual founder of South Australia. In fact, his main work was the revival of the spirit of true colonisation within the Empire. The secret of his success lay, we venture to think, in his individual character not in his power to group parties and sections, and the same remark seems to apply more or less to Sir William Molesworth who was straightforward and definite in all his ideas. On the subject of South Africa he has left on record a very plain-spoken individual opinion, not necessarily the opinion of the Colonial Reformers of the day, for Roebuck in his book (1849) on a Plan for the Government of some of our Colonies included South Africa in his vision of "Federated Commonwealths," placing it in the same category with Canada and Australasia, but one founded on certain historical and economical arguments. For these there was a certain amount of justification, the Imperial Government always expending an enormous amount of money in wars but never following them up with a definite policy. In one of his last speeches in Parliament (if not the very last), Sir William stated, July 31st, 1855, that our military expenditure at the Cape then amounted to between £400,000 and £500,000 a year, to say nothing of the series of Kaffir wars which on the average had cost Great Britain £1,000,000 a year. By the side of recent expenditures these amounts seem small indeed, but England has learned to her cost the terrible results of vacillation and infirmity of purpose. Sir William, however, instead of taking the view that national and imperial expenditure ought justly to be regarded as pledges to stay in South Africa, adopted the contrary attitude

and argued that it should mean withdrawal. His views have been embodied in a pamphlet under the heading of *MATERIALS FOR A SPEECH MADE IN DEFENCE OF THE POLICY OF ABANDONING THE ORANGE RIVER TERRITORY*, MAY, 1854, published in October, 1878, at the request of the late President Kruger and General Joubert. These Boers thought that the facts and arguments put forward for the abandonment of the Orange River Sovereignty were, from their point of view, so true and just that by inference they might powerfully aid the cause of the Transvaal.

A perusal of this pamphlet certainly shows that Sir William knew his South African history well, and was at home in the perplexing turns of policy there, but, for all that, it was no great brief for the Boers themselves. It was rather a counsel of despair. England's sovereignty should be limited to the coast regions, especially as the uplands and plains of the interior appeared to be nothing better than a howling wilderness full of wild beasts and natives. The same kind of argument for shelving South African responsibilities appeared much later in our history, during the Bechuanaland debates (1884-5). Lord Derby was much of the same opinion as Sir William Molesworth as to the worthlessness of the South African veldt, ignoring altogether the very important point that Bechuanaland afforded the road to the interior, and also that the barren-looking mimosa-clad veldt sometimes conceals mineral wealth.

Sir William took his stand on the Sand River Convention of 1852 and thought that its exact and express fulfilment spelt finality in South African politics. He never paused to enquire whether the Boers kept their side of the agreement, especially on the subject of the natives and the

great question of slavery. As a matter of fact the Boers have never concluded any treaty with Great Britain which they did not mean to violate, and did flagrantly violate both in letter and spirit upon the earliest possible occasion.

The rôle of the Christian missionary in South Africa never appealed to Sir William, and although David Livingstone was actually working and exploring in Bechuanaland and in the valley of the Zambesi at the time he spoke, he certainly was misinformed as to the value of the great traveller's work. Otherwise he would never have said, "I believe that there is not one well authenticated instance of the conversion to Christianity of any person belonging to the great Kaffir race. The only result of the attempt to improve these savages has been to give them a taste for spirituous liquors and to inspire them with an ardent longing for muskets and gunpowder." We cannot follow Sir William here, but we can very easily see why his pamphlet was so eminently acceptable to Messrs. Kruger and Joubert. Views of South African policy seem fated to be sensational and kaleidoscopic, and consequently we are scarcely surprised to read in Lord Norton's *COLONIAL POLICY AND HISTORY* (published in 1869) that at that particular time there was a general desire among the Dutch to be re-united in some way to the British Government, a prevalent opinion that all South Africa habitable by Europeans should come under some central authority. The Duke of Buckingham was in favour of it, and so was Mr. Cardwell, but somehow the great opportunity was missed.

The moment was there, but unfortunately the man was wanting.

To conclude,—if there be any wisdom in the saying that out of the mistakes of the past we may learn to be wise for the future, Mrs. Fawcett's book should be read with great profit. Sir William Molesworth emphatically sounded the keynote of a policy destined to be with us long, unless we misread the signs of the times,—the policy of understanding and utilising our Colonial Empire in every way, especially for the purposes of trade and Imperial defence. This policy must be practically a national policy. Its absolute importance should lift it at once above the mire of mere Party-conflicts. Judging from recent history we are still far from this exalted frame of mind. Should a Philosophical Radical arise from his grave now in England he would find that the term Radicalism has long stunk in the nostrils of the colonists. The motley crew which represents the Radical Party have long set their faces against colonial feeling and colonial sentiment, and we have heard of a Radical orator escaping with difficulty from a Birmingham audience disguised as a policeman, a very notable transformation, however we may look at it.

Could there be any symptom more significant than that of the change of opinion and the shifting of Parties in England? We want another Gibbon Wakefield who would form a society composed of men of all Parties to approach the vast colonial and Imperial problems now coming into view, as well as the untiring zeal of a Molesworth to give it representative and Parliamentary expression.

SHEPHERDING ON THE FELS IN WINTER.

THE hours immediately preceding a severe snow-storm, when the leaden, lowering sky presages an evil time, are busy ones with the shepherd on the fells. Daily, whatever the weather, he has been compelled to court the pastures of the uplands so that his flocks may as long as possible subsist on the scanty herbage remaining there. On our northern fells the shepherd's chief winter duty is to "look" his sheep, that is, to patrol the wild heafs, or mountain-pastures, and see that none are suffering from accident or ailment, counting them meanwhile, and watching keenly to detect truants, both to and from his flock. His charge is scattered over a wide area when the first signs of storm appear, and he has to collect them as quickly as possible and drive them to some selected portion whence they will not be inclined to ramble, and where there is little danger of their being overwhelmed in the tremendous drifts which are blown together.

We had climbed the mountains bounding our dale and were retreating before the wild threatening sky when we saw far beneath us the Thorns shepherd collecting his flock from the wide heaf extending upwards from the head of the pass. Though the shepherd was working his hardest, it was clear that he could not complete his task before the storm broke. Every gully was cleared at the greatest possible speed, his dogs racing round the flanks of the wide breast of sheep, hunting laggards out from various shelters by boulder and ghyll, and driving the whole helter-

skelter toward the centre. As we made our way along rockstrewn High-Crag-End, we saw across the narrow glen other shepherds, frantically working to get their flocks also to shelter. A slight squall,—forerunner of the storm—struck us as we plunged down towards the Thorns enclosure, and then the force of the wind for a few minutes abated, dying away in a moan along the grassy slopes. As the shepherd redoubled his exertions in this momentary lull, the air darkened; it seemed indeed that the leaden vault dropped down, enveloping us, and blotting out the dull light of the January day. There was a distant wailing and booming; the nearing blast was fretting with its enormous strength among the rugged crags high above our heads. In deepening gloom we pushed on. At the Thorns enclosure we found that the dogs had in almost total darkness completed their task, and were now hurrying in the last of the dazed sheep. Jack, the shepherd, stood at the gateway and counted them as they passed to safety. This small marshy basin at the head of the dale, sheltered somewhat from the wildest gales by an almost semi-circular scaur, was where, from many generations, the Thorns sheep had been driven upon the approach of a storm. As we groped our way down the hillside, the shepherd told us that but few fleeces were missing from his flock. The storm's first fury now broke around us and, with pitiful bleatings, the sheep, crowding into the circumscribed area within our ken, lay down with their backs

turned to the white laden blast. In this position they would remain till the storm had passed, whether it lasted for one day or seven, whether they were on the exposed upland with the gale's worst gusts screeching around them, or in the ghylls with drift forming a hundred feet deep above them. About an hour later we reached home. During the long evening our shepherd braved the storm to go through the dalehead and find whether every shepherd belonging to our fell had yet come in from his day's toil. In three hours he returned with the news that all were safe.

With fears thus set at rest, we were able to sit down to listen to the old farmer's stories of danger and heroism, in times old and new, faced by those who gain their livings on the stormy mountains. He told of many hair-breadth escapes and a few fatalities. One was particularly tragic. At the head of one of the smaller valleys near this is a ruined cottage, at one time tenanted by the shepherd to the largest farm in the dale. One December morning, about the time of Waterloo, the shepherd started out to drive his flock some miles across the wastes. At noon a very heavy snowstorm came on, and just as the day was closing, the shepherd's wife heard dogs barking and sheep bleating at the gateway between the valley fields and the open fell. For a while she paid little attention to these sounds, thinking that her husband would open the wicket and allow his flock to pass through. As time went on, and the sounds came no nearer, she felt that something was amiss, and wrapping her shawl about her went out to the gate herself. In the white whirl she saw sheep and dogs,—but her husband was not with them. Guided by the dogs she ventured far into the fear-

ful storm till her strength gave out, and so exhausted was she that she barely dragged herself home to her five small children.

At this point the old man ceased his narrative, for over the wild thunderings of the gale rang the clamour of our dogs. The kitchen door was opened wide and, in the fold, half blinded by the sudden glare in his face, stood the white shrouded figure of a man. He walked wearily towards us and half fell with fatigue as he crossed the threshold. A dozen hands were instantly at work stripping off his outer garments, when one of our men recognised him as a shepherd belonging to Moresdale. "How came you here?" was the question. "Are you alone?" Half dazed by the sudden transference from griping cold to genial warmth, the man did not for a few moments answer. Then he related how at dawning he had set off to bring down his sheep, how, when his work was almost through, the storm had burst, how he tried in vain to get down to the farms, and how, in the darkness, he missed even his dogs. After this, gradually losing strength, he had ploughed for hours through the raging storm. Once he came to where a cliff fell steeply away; again and again he had reached wire fences and followed them awhile only to lose their guidance at some deep wide drift; for at least an hour, he thought, he had walked about a field near by, seeking to reach an illusory light. At last he heard our dogs bark. Such an incident is not a rare one among the stormy fells, and the presence of one who had so narrowly escaped death gave the more zest to the sequel of the old man's tale, which continued thus.

The storm raged unabated in violence for a week, when the widow,—for thus she now was—managed to

force her way to the nearest farmhouse (some four miles away), and raise the alarm. In an hour every man in the countryside was afoot, and, guided by the shepherd's own dogs, the body was soon found. In crossing a narrow, steep ghyll it seemed that he had missed his footing on the snow, and in the fall his head had struck against a protruding rock. To the insensibility thus caused had gradually succeeded the inertia of severe cold and, without a struggle, the man's life had ebbed away.

All night the snow fell; before daybreak the white flakes ceased for a while, and this cessation was not complete before the whole household was astir, and we turned out to view the dale in its new garb. A full moon was riding majestically in the cold blue sky, from which a million stars twinkled. Our host, however, would not suffer the shepherd to venture out to his distant flock, and his weatherwise caution was almost immediately justified by the appearance in the south-west of more snow-clouds. The lull in the storm lasted but an hour, and only to break out more fiercely than before. It was not till thirty hours later that it became possible to give adequate attention to the sheep on the fells. Thrice in the meantime had a temporary cessation of the storm been seized upon as an opportunity to survey the ewes in the low-lying pastures near the homestead. After one of these inspections the shepherd reported five of their number missing, and also that the gale was piling a huge drift level with the fence at the lower corner of the field. The dogs were brought out, and, just as the white blast again seethed up the dale, we began to locate the missing animals. The snow was not yet crusted with frost, and at every step we sank deep into the powdery mass, but the

collies, though floundering up to the hips at every moment, could still scent the buried sheep. The gale had now become so furious that the top-most layers of snow were being swept down into our excavation almost as fast as our spades could throw them out. We gained some relief by building up a parapet of the harder snow to windward, adding to our defences as the continual silting-up made necessary. The drift was only some eight feet deep, and one or two of the sheep were not buried to any great depth, so after an hour's hard struggle, during which the storm seemed more than once likely to add to its prisoners by burying men, dogs, and all in one common heap, the victory lay with us, and the five ewes were driven back, protesting, to the higher and safer ground. In the teeth of the blast we pushed knee-deep through the snow back to the homestead. At noon on the third day the heavy clouds cleared, and the pale chill sunshine gleamed over hill-sides, coppices, and fields clogged with snow, while a frosty silence brooded forlornly over all, as it seemed to ears almost deafened by the thundering onslaughts of the gale.

Then, through the deep drifts and across tracts from which the wind had swept the snow, five of us, spade on shoulder and dogs trotting patiently at heel, made our way towards the Thorns high intake, where our flock should be. We had hopes that our own task would be a light one. When struck by a storm it is the habit of sheep, as one may say, to grin and bear it; but immediately calm follows the stress, it is equally sheep-like to be up and away as rapidly as legs can go. To what remote places a sheep may get after a snowstorm can be imagined, when it is stated that in the dozen miles between the Thorns enclosure and Helvellyn there are not

more than seven fences, each of which can be passed at a score of points after a heavy fall.

We took the quickest way under High-Crag-End, where wide stretches of rock and grass had been blown clear of snow, and were soon at our enclosure. Many sheep were wandering about in a dazed fashion, digging deep furrows into the snow in search of something eatable; now and again one would stop in its work, and, looking askance around from the bleak snow-clad hillocks to the forbidding white mountain barrier and, higher, to the cheerless blue sky, give forth a wild pitiful bleating in which one comrade after another would join till the still air rang to the echoing plaint. Very quickly, as he stalked about the enclosure, the shepherd counted his flock, announcing finally that only some six in all were missing. "I saw two-three white-faces in the becksides before we left," he said, and, as this and all other gullies and inequalities of the great moor were drifted level, we knew at once that there was nothing for it but digging. At a word the dogs raced along in front, quartering the glistening surface thoroughly. First one, then another, stopped and began to scratch frantically at the drift. "They'll be here," said the shepherd, and stepping back a few feet we began to dig. After a few minutes' hard work the first sheep was released, and was driven by the dogs to its comrades; three others, who seemed none the worse for their fifty hours' imprisonment, were reached by a short passage; the rest were much more difficult to get at. At the outset of the storm they had sheltered under the lee of a crag in the ghyll-side, and the whirlwinds of snow had filled the hollow to the brim, arching over the streamlet. In the absence of the shepherd, who was examining a lame sheep, we began to

dig down at a few feet from the damp breath-patches which, in striking contrast to the frost-spangled surface, show pretty closely the whereabouts of a missing sheep. Our pit had got fairly deep when, on our leading spadesman stepping into it, there was a sudden creaking and rending of snow, and down he went, clean out of sight. We had dug into the natural arch over the waterway at its thinnest part, and our friend was precipitated some twelve feet into the broth the tiny brook was carrying down. We drew him up at once, but his clothes were soaking, and, for his health's sake, we sent him at a trot back to the Thorns. Wiser by this mishap, we set to work again and, with the aid of the shepherd, in time exhumed the other two sheep. One of these was almost dead with cold, its lair having been so near the becksides that when the stream became swollen with melting snow the rising waters had reached it and soaked its fleece. Imprisoned so closely, there is no doubt that had it been left until the thaw really began, it would have been suffocated,—a common fate in such positions.

The sheep on our own immediate domain attended to, and our fence re-erected where the pressure of the wind had torn it from its slender foundations, we walked across to the Kirt Crag allotments. Here the shepherd had been forced to abandon his flock in a deep glen surrounded by rough crags. Jacob Mattison was a master in his craft, and that he too should have been overwhelmed excused every one else. We got to the ghyll just as daylight began to fade, and seeing that the buried sheep would take no harm from a few hours' delay, and moreover that the glaring, smoky sunset threatened a return of yesterday's horrors, nothing was done save to drive to the security of the fold

such sheep as were wandering about on the fell-side.

While we were thus employed word was brought that Will, the shepherd of the Hollins, was missing. He had ventured out several hours ago in the last temporary lull of the storm to go round a portion of his fell, arranging that his comrade should take the other part. Wilson came back safe and sound, but Will he had not met since they parted. The news had spread far in a short hour; every dog and man in the dalehead was already in requisition and we hastened to take our place on the Hollins heaf. The patrol swung out along the drifts, here and there stopping to exhume what the infallible instinct of the dogs indicated,—in every case a sheep. Two hours passed; daylight was succeeded by moonlight; we were fighting against time, and every second was precious. Then the still air was rent with a wild shout of relief, as, supported by a young shepherd from Mid Stang, Will was seen limping along the fell towards us. His story was brief. After reaching the point arranged as a rendezvous with his comrade, and not seeing that worthy, he had essayed to complete the round of the fell, despite the terrific storm, fearing that some accident had befallen Wilson. He had almost reached the most distant corner of the heaf, when, in crossing a slippery crag-bed, he had fallen, catching his leg in a cranny of the rock and so twisting his knee that further progress was almost impossible. For a few minutes he had sat facing the awful prospect of a lingering death from exposure, then recollecting that, some half-mile away, across very open, rocky ground, there was a rudely built hut in the next heaf, he had painfully essayed to make his way there. The journey took him over an hour in his numbed and lame

condition. Even in the shelter of the hut the bitter cold racked his limbs adding torment to his injury, and, as he truly averred, had he not lain between his dogs and encouraged them to nestle close to him, he would assuredly have been frozen to death ere the Mid Stang shepherd visited the hut.

Day after day we now went on to the fells. Jack, the shepherd, looked his sheep, and then joined us in assisting Jacob to disentomb his flock, which numbered a thousand. Five hundred of these, who had escaped the drifts, were folded on the day that the storm ceased. On the next day, over two hundred were brought in, and on the third day nearly the same number. These sheep had been buried six feet, from which depth the breath-marks on the snow-crust are plainly visible. Each day the depth to be probed increased, and of course the number of sheep released became correspondingly less. On the ninth day, my comrades and myself drove a tunnel into a big drift piled against the craggiest part of the hill-side. Instead of digging straight down we took the drift length-wise, and, gradually sinking deeper, came to the level on which the sheep were. At the outset our proceedings were much hampered by the caving in of the walls and roof of the tunnel, and on one occasion we had to combine with those in the open to dig a way out again. Deeper down we found the snow packed denser and thus safer to deal with. Space does not permit the description of every incident, but by this method we came within reach of some two more sheep. These, though buried so long, were quite lively, for, when the last piece of snow was removed, they scurried through the gloomy passage and into the clear biting air at full speed.

When I looked at the glen in which

Jacob Mattison's flock had been overwhelmed and saw the huge masses of snow banked up against the crags, I thought that from this place surely would the last of the buried sheep be released, but I was mistaken. Forty-one days after the storm sirens had screamed their last defiance from the uplands, in wandering through the dale my eye was attracted by some men moving about the edges of a narrow chine, or rift in the rock, through which a stream descended from the moor. To half its depth this was still filled with snow, the last patch of white remaining near our dale. Scrambling through a coppice, we reached a green sledge-road which carried us to where the shepherds had congregated. They were consulting how to dig through the drift in which the dogs had located three distinct breathing-places, though on the thaw-grimed surface none of these was visible to us. The mass of snow was not very great, but there was reason to fear that a large piece of superincumbent cliff had broken from its base and was being held in position by the drift. Of course if much of this were excavated there was no saying how many yards of the ravine might not fall in upon the workers. The council was divided: some were for waiting the general thaw and sacrificing the sheep, others for their rescue and risking the fall of a thousand tons of rock in the attempt; and the latter opinion prevailed. Starting at the lower edge of the drift, the small aperture of the water-way was enlarged to admit a man stooping. As he cut his way further, in, another was posted to throw back the material the first loosened. We were fortunate enough to get an early place among the workers and ere long were hewing out blocks of wet snow to ease our leader. The dogs, however, when taken into the tunnel,

found the scent bad, and the reason was soon made plain. Striking forward and upward with the pick loose stones of various sizes were encountered, showing that there had been a considerable landslip either during or immediately after the storm. In front our progress was now stopped by a large boulder lying right athwart our path. We gave up all hope of success; the situation was desperately unsafe, since at any moment the loosened crags above might crash down and bury us in our tunnel, but our leader, after ascertaining the extent of the obstruction, daringly decided to go ahead. The tunnel was accordingly driven over the stone. Old Towler, here brought in, gave the first welcome signs of approach to our search, and like moles we burrowed ahead, sadly troubling the men behind to keep the tunnel clear of our dislodged snow. At last, after a feverish spell of work, a hardened mass of snow was encountered; the keen shepherd ran his spade round and separated it, disclosing a sheep, but what a sheep! Words cannot describe its appearance, but memory can never forget the glazed sightless eyes, the mouth feebly opening and closing, but giving forth no sound. Vitality was restored by aid of stimulants and the emaciated animal was carried down to the nearest farm. The other two sheep were reached about an hour later; they had been buried next the foot of the sheer rock and had, in their hunger, sucked up every particle of soil within reach, and even licked the living rock in order to gain some slight relief.

Our task being ended, we left the dark tunnel safely. The splintered rock, which had so nearly daunted us, came down when the first flood of spring thawed the last sheet of ice beneath its loosened base.

WILLIAM T. PALMER.

THE LEGION OF THE LOST.

IN the private drawer in the private safe in the private bureau of a certain War-Office is the official record of a certain regiment. The very sight of the outside of it puts the Minister of War for the time being into an evil humour. If he has to open that drawer he uses unofficial language, and closes it again with a bang that is a commination in itself. For the record of that regiment is closed,—or rather it is not closed; it breaks off without any ending whatever. The regiment itself has disappeared,—not on the field of battle, where to disappear is to live for ever. This regiment did what no other regiment ever succeeded in doing. It vanished,—into thin air and elsewhere; and this is the first time the story has been told.

In its own country it was known as the Legion of the Lost, a name which, in view of what happened, is not without its prophetic touch. It was composed of the off-scourings of an army which had become rotten through many years of peace. War is a horror, and the necessity for being ever ready for war a grievous burden. At times, in the long slow years of peace, the war-machine grows foul,—as any other machine grows foul for lack of use—and this machine is only to be cleansed by blood. Much depends on temperament, and these men belonged to a nation who could always do anything better than wait. No man who has ever seen even the fringe of the trail of blood and fire may speak lightly of war; but, to a nation such as this, war seems one of the necessities of life. Without the letting of blood the body politic grows

corrupt. In the opening of the veins is certain relief,—especially to the head—and a certain drastic cleansing throughout the limbs. And well the head has known it.

There are black sheep in every army. When their fleeces were judged beyond the power of anything but blood to cleanse, the black sheep of this army were sent to the Legion of the Lost. I have spoken of it as a regiment. To be precise it was only a detachment, and there were several similar ones, all kept as far apart from one another as possible, and each, except in the simple detail of numbers, a regiment in itself and fully constituted as such,—heavily over-officered of course, and every officer armed to the teeth; but that was sheer necessity, considering the elements they had to keep under control, or at all events at arm's length. It was the military ash-pit, the convict establishment of the army, and several times worse than the hulks. And since one does not locate one's ash-pit any nearer one's dwelling than is absolutely necessary, this military sink was situated across seas in a red-hot land of sands and withering sun,—possibly with a view to the thinning of hot blood by external heat; possibly in the hope that perpetual sun-baths might prove as beneficial to the moral as they had been proved to be to the material fibre; possibly with a humane idea of affording this human refuse a foretaste of the hereafter, and of acclimatising it by degrees to that state in which its eternal future might naturally be expected to be spent.

When a man perforce entered the Legion of the Lost he abandoned hope but did not as a rule give himself up to despair. On the contrary he set himself to the enjoyment of life, such as it was, after the manner of a lost soul. His enjoyments were peculiar, and not to be described in detail. In their higher flights they rose occasionally to the murder of an officer. His own life hung at any moment on the pressure of his officer's finger. At all times he resented such a state of matters, even though custom had habituated him to it. At times he brought the balance even by pressing his own trigger first.

The sun was setting away out there over the desert. In a few minutes it would be night. Three men lay on the sand and turned the last moments of daylight to profitable account in the throwing of dice. The dice were home-made, roughly shaped out of mutton-bones, the points red dots of blood. From the intentness of their faces the stake was evidently a high one.

"Seven!" growled the first thrower in his throat. He was a thin angular man, with prominent cheekbones and deep-set eyes. His face was like a hawk's, and his hands were bony claws. He went by the name of Zaphr, which I believe has something to do with a hawk or a vulture. Every man in the Legion had his nickname. Some of them knew no other, and some would have resented the use of their rightful names as much as their companions would have been astonished by them.

Number Two took the bones between his big red hands and dropped them lightly on the smoothed sand. "Eight! Curse the luck! He'll beat me yet." He said it with much vehemence, but the others laughed, which made him angry. "Well then, what?" he asked roughly and all

a-bristle. He was the exact opposite of Number One, inclined to fat in spite of all hindrances, coarse, flabby, brutalised. His nickname was Bourreau, the Butcher, and he looked it, every hair of him. His greatest pleasure in life was in slaughtering the beasts for the regiment, and they suffered much at his hands. He was big and heavy, and by nature a bully. His comrades made light of his courage, except where such things as sheep and pigs were concerned; and as bullying in the Legion was the special prerogative of the sergeants, and would have provoked prompt reprisals if attempted by one of the rank and file themselves, the Butcher took it out of the sheep whose powers of retaliation were limited.

"Now, P'tit," said Number One, "shake 'em up and see what *le bon Dieu* sends you."

Number Three was small and slight. From the back he looked like a school-boy, but his smooth long face was the face of a priest. As a matter of fact he had studied for the priesthood with a view to escaping service, but had failed in his examinations to the utmost limit of the law, and had fallen from grace in divers other ways. There was that in his face which none could understand. At times it looked very old, older than any man's face has any right to look however old he may or may not be. He went by the generic name of Petit Corbeau,—Crow being a common nickname for the wearers of the black robe—but this was generally shortened into P'tit.

Little Mr. Crow shook the dice up and down in his balled hands so long that the Butcher growled, "Come on, come on! Get done, man!"

P'tit's little close-set eyes laughed into the Hawk's eyes opposite though his face was quite unmoved. He

continued to rattle the bones between his palms, and the Butcher's red face twisted up into a scowl. It seemed to afford the little man much satisfaction.

"Have done, have done!" growled the Butcher again. "We don't want to be all night over it."

Then with a final rattle the dice fell.

"Nine! Confound it, you're in luck!" said the Butcher, and the other two laughed again at the touch of relief which would into his voice.

Little Mr. Crow had not even looked at the dice. He was watching the Butcher's face with infinite amusement.

"Hullo, boys! I'm in this. What's the stake?"

It was a new voice, hoarse and scrappy as though with over-use, and a new hand reached over their shoulders and grabbed the dice.

"Hola, Sunstroke! We began to think they'd forgotten you as they did the poor Barabbas," said P'tit.

"Not me, my boy! I've been singing so loud they couldn't possibly forget me. I'm as hoarse as a crow and my bones creak. Listen!" and he bent stiffly to and fro, but the creaking was not audible.

He was aptly named, being a big man with bold blue eyes and straw-coloured hair and beard, and a good-humoured, intelligent face. At the moment he looked very hungry and visibly tired out. He had just been released from punishment in the silo, —a perpendicular hole in the sand into which the prisoner is dropped and left to make himself as comfortable as he can for twenty-four or forty-eight hours, and fed on bread and water. The unfortunate Barabbas had somehow been overlooked and left in the silo for over a week. When he died nobody knew, and truth to tell nobody particularly cared.

"Come! What's the stake?" asked Sunstroke, as he dropped heavily on to the sand and rattled the dice in his big hand.

The three looked at one another for a second. Then P'tit said quietly, "Coquerico."

"Good!" said the big man, with a blaze in his eyes. "I'm on! How's the score?" and he shook the dice joyfully.

"Seven," said Zaphr the Hawk.

"Eight," said Bourreau the Butcher.

"Nine," said little Mr. Crow.

"*Tchutt!* I can beat that," said the big man, and dropped the dice in the sand.

"Twelve! I win! I told you so! When?"

"Before next Sunday," said Bourreau in the best of spirits.

"Right! Now let's get something to eat," and they strolled away to their tent.

They passed Sergeant Coquerico on the way and saluted him with punctilious politeness.

"*Vale, vale, morituum te salutamus!*" murmured P'tit, jibing grimly with the old farewell.

"What's that?" said Sunstroke, who had not studied for the priesthood.

"Adieu, Coquerico," said Little Mr. Crow. For Sergeant Coquerico was to die before Sunday, and the dice had selected Sunstroke as the instrument of his dismissal.

The Providence, however, which watches over even such things as sergeants of the Line had other ends in view for all of them.

In the early dawn an orderly galloped in with despatches for the colonel, and by the hour at which they were usually cursing through early drill, tents had been struck, and the detachment was *en route* for rail-head,—a pleasant excitement visible among the officers, and a certain

dogged anticipation even among the men,—anything for a change, for the desert was deadly dull.

Two days later they were rolling through the blue seas towards Port Said on that very ancient transport **PRIDE OF THE EAST**, a fateful name again, for pride rides to a fall as surely as the sun sinks to the west. By the end of the first day most of them were thinking with regret of the comparative solidity of their desert sands, where, *parbleu* ! if it was dull one's stomach at all events kept in its right place.

The **PRIDE OF THE EAST** was the oldest transport in the service, and a bibulous old tub she was. A wet ship even in fine weather, she seemed to roll more when the sea was smooth than when it was rough, if that were possible. She had accommodation, such as it was, for two hundred men ; when two hundred and fifty were crowded into her she was more uncomfortable even than her builders had intended to make her. There were in addition ten officers, and twenty-four non-commissioned officers on board, while the officers and crew of the ship amounted in round numbers to fifty all told. There were therefore in all three hundred and thirty-four men on board, and until they made Port Said two hundred and eighty-two of them were *miserables* of the most miserable. Thirty-four of these were indeed borne up, more or less, by a sense of duty, which however failed to keep them from being exceedingly sea-sick ; the odd two were exceptions to the general rule, and these were the gentlemen we have already been introduced to,—Mr. Sunstroke and Little Mr. Crow.

Why they were exempt from the prevailing epidemic it is impossible to say ; *kismet*, perhaps, as their desert friends would have said. Sergeant Coquerico was there, as sick a man as

any. Sunday was past and yet he lived. Many times before Sunday came he would have been grateful if Sunstroke had executed the decree of the dice and put him out of his misery. But Little Mr. Crow had bidden Sunstroke hold his hand, and bit by bit he told him why ; and as he listened Sunstroke's bold blue eyes began to blaze as P'tit's little black ones had been blazing ever since they got the route, and he learned whither they were bound.

It took P'tit some time and much earnest whispering to make Sunstroke understand all the possibilities. When he did so he swore in his moustache by the sacred name of a dog that it was magnificent, and General Bosquet himself, if he had been alive, would certainly have called it by some other name than war.

Once in the canal, the two hundred and forty-eight recovered themselves somewhat. By the time they had measured the length of the Red Sea their eyes too were smouldering and blazing with varying degrees of intensity. For Little Mr. Crow and jovial Mr. Sunstroke had been busy among them, and the fire in their eyes was only the outward and visible sign of the fires they had kindled within.

They were signalled at Aden and rolled away through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. There the known record ends. The **PRIDE OF THE EAST**, with the Legion of the Lost on board, wallowed away towards Guardafui and vanished from human ken.

We need not become accessories, even after the fact, by a too detailed knowledge of what followed. It would not be nice reading. Broad facts will suffice.

Four days later the Somali coast was roused suddenly and brusquely from its undisturbed sleep of the ages

and witnessed strange doings. I cannot tell you where the actual landing took place, but it was somewhere between Kiunga and Kimana, almost on the equator, probably one or two degrees south.

A cloud no bigger than a man's hand blurred the white sky-line between the upper and the lower blues. It grew like a tree, only more quickly. A dot appeared below it,—the root of the tree. The dot increased in size and consistency and came straight for the shore, as if bound on an overland trip to the great lakes themselves. Presently it turned and lengthened out into a great steamship with no flag flying, wallowing lazily as if its work was almost over, and puffing out jets of white steam here and there.

Then there came great traffic between the ship and the shore. And as the white water-beetles with the flashing legs plied to and fro continuously, the shore became more and more crowded with men and things in vast profusion. The work went on unceasingly and the piles on shore grew ever higher and higher,—things that made for life and things that made for death. And he who seemed to rule was a big man with blazing blue eyes and sunny hair, and ever by his side was a small dark man with the back of a schoolboy and the face of a priest. Tents rose on the sandy shore, fires were lighted, savoury smells such as it had never dreamed of tickled the nose of that astonished coast, and its ears were filled with unwonted sounds of revelry by day and by night.

By day, however, there was much work to be done, and they took it in turns to do it. By the third day the ship was stripped of all they could use. Then the lazy wallower turned and rolled away from the land, slowly and reluctantly as though loth to go,

and the crowd lined the shore to watch. And presently the very last water-beetle left her side and came plodding slowly home, bringing the sunny-haired man and a number of grimy-faced ones in blue cotton, and at times they stopped and all sat looking at the ship.

But they had been ashore some time before a muffled exclamation broke out all along the line of gazers like an ill-fired volley, and the sea in front of them was smooth and flawless to the sky-line. There was no rolling pall of smoke, no thunderous explosion. These might have attracted the observation of the English cruisers down Patta way, or the nearer attention of passing ships. Just the turning of a few cocks down below and the *PRIDE OF THE EAST* had had her fall and was dredging the sands of the Indian Ocean.

They were quieter on shore that night than they had been on previous nights. They had been cutting links,—and other things—for days past, but now the last link of all was cut. There had been no possible turning back before, but somehow the sinking of the ship emphasised the fact and brought it home to them. Wild as they were, brutalised and rough beyond belief almost, there were thoughtful ones among them that night.

In the morning the sunny-haired man with the blazing blue eyes gathered them round him and spoke to them words they could understand, only a few words and to the point.

"Comrades," he said, "we are free of the yoke. The future is our own. Over there to the west lies our New World. There are great rivers, great lakes, food in abundance, all the wives you want, and gold for the finding. When we have conquered our kingdom, and got the gold, we

will find ways of getting home again and each man can play Monte Christo for himself. To do all this there must be a leader, and there must be discipline, or it will all end in ruin. The way is long: we may have to fight; but the country is there, and all we have to do is to go on and on till we reach it. We are a Republic and you have chosen me President; I will choose certain ones to help me. For your own sakes, and for all our sakes, I trust you will all join me in keeping order, and will act for the common good. If anyone has any complaint to make let him make it to me; I will see that every man has his rights."

They shouted acquiescence, and some gathered round to discuss the next move.

In all there were exactly two hundred and sixty-five of them—lost souls all, all in, and out of, the same boat. And the remaining sixty-nine? They were gone,—where sergeants cease from troubling and faithful mariners have rest. With them went ten of the Lost ones, who went perforce in company with those they sent, and so perhaps were less lost than those who stayed behind; their troubles at all events were ended so far as we are concerned. Of the ship's crew some twenty-five had joined the mutineers, mostly grimy-faced men from below whose lives had been spent in torment and who jumped at the prospect of a change which could hardly be for the worse. And the brain of all that desperate deed was Little Mr. Crow, but Mr. Sunstroke was the head and hand and front.

A week was given to rest and recovery from the sickness of the sea. Officers were appointed whose suggestions had in them no faintest approach to the manner of the late Sergeant Coquerico. A certain amount of mild drilling was indulged in, and the

things got out of the ship were reduced to portable packages.

Then President Sunstroke with fifty men went for a stroll into the country to see if they could strike the local Flageollet and arrange with him for the transport of their baggage on their own terms. They came in time upon a Somali village, the natural light-heartedness of whose inhabitants clouded somewhat at the sight of so many well-armed and forceful-looking strangers. They were strong enough to have demanded all they wanted and to have taken it if they were refused; but little Mr. Crow wisely advised the making of no more enemies than was absolutely necessary. So they struck a bargain by signs and a few Arabic words, and eventually returned to camp with carriers enough for all their loads and half-a-dozen camels for the heavier baggage. By sheer intuition and common sense President Sunstroke engaged the men for only as far as the next place where carriers might be had: "They'll go more willingly if they know they're not going far," he said; but the camels he bought outright in exchange for rifles and cartridges. With a last look at the sea, the great company,—the greatest company of armed white men that country had ever seen, I suppose,—turned and headed due west by the ship's spare compass. The proud black man who carried the compass regarded it as a fetish of peculiar power, if not the actual god of the white men, and treated it accordingly.

So, over the endless plains they went,—now all sand and stones, now covered with heath and scrub and thorny mimosa and scarifying cacti; and again breaking noisily through the arched solitudes of mighty forests, or picking a precarious path amid the deadly silences of pestiferous swamps. They began their march before the

sun each day, and rested when their shadows were under their feet, to start again when they were lengthening out behind them. Fresh meat was plentiful, antelopes abounded on the plains and wild ducks in the swamps, and each man had his turn at the sport. In the villages where they changed carriers maize and bananas were generally obtainable; so the tinned meats from the ship were held in reserve in case the country in front should prove less bountiful.

Fifteen miles a day was about as much as they could manage with comfort. All time was before them and there was no need for undue haste. They struck a broad river,—probably the Tana—and followed it up so long as it came from the west, and they lived on fish and waterfowl, and life was one long picnic. And so far, with abundance of food, and no more work than was good for health and appetite, and every man his own master yet all pulling one way, nothing had occurred to disturb the peace of the community. The peoples among whom they passed, overawed by their numbers and the determination of their looks, yielded to their requirements without a word, and were glad to be rid of them at any price within their means. And so far, too, no occasion had arisen for any exhibition of authority adverse to the general wishes. One mind was in them all, and that to get on to the promised land as speedily as present comfort would permit.

The river began at last to come towards them from the south, and reluctantly they parted company with it. Rumours, too, began to increase with every foot they advanced, of bad lands in front,—lands bad in themselves for the feeding of so large a company, and overrun by mighty warriors who meted out certain death to all who set foot within their bor-

ders. Hence followed a tightening of discipline and some grumbling at the unaccustomed feel of it. Then came dark days on stony steppes, where water was barely to be found and game not at all. But they fell back on their stores and pushed on. And as troubles never come singly, there were dangers behind as well as before. For of late they had had nothing to give in payment to their carriers, and their services had been perforce and the obligation much resented. So, as the carriers could get no pay, they hung like an impalpable cloud on the rear of the column and picked up what they could. From being beasts of burden they became beasts of prey, and the life of a man was of small account when it stood between them and their desire. But the cloud was impalpable only when the white men tried to retaliate; it scattered and vanished before their angry reprisals, and gathered again like a swarm of hornets when they retired.

They lost men, and, worse still, they lost *morale*. Men they could afford to lose to a certain extent; of *morale* their original stock was none too large and any depletion of it was a serious matter. But nerves, even the nerves of seasoned men, will get jangled with constant straining. A fight would have done them a world of good, but the shadows behind were not to be grappled with, and those in front were darker still and still less tangible.

President Sunstroke's jolly face was clouded with the shadows in front; the troubles behind did not greatly affect him. He ground his teeth and swore in his moustache and ached for a fight that should clear the way and quicken the flow of the red blood, even though it flowed outside as well as inside. And Little Mr. Crow tramped on by his side, laughing at troubles and keeping

them to their course by the ship's compass, which he had carried himself ever since he had been forced to shoot its bearer for trying to make off with it.

The troubles increased. All outgoing and nothing coming in tends to bankruptcy in provisions as well as in cash. Short commons drew forth murmurs loud and long. Still hope dies hard; what was behind they knew, and the promised land might be just a day ahead. So they ate their sulky camels and pushed on stolidly with empty stomachs and overfull mouths. And one day the sun sank towards the north and another day towards the south, and Little Mr. Crow, knowing that the ground they were walking on was playing high jinks with his compass, thereafter steered by the sun. And some days there was no sun but only whirling sheets of rain, which gave them water indeed but did not make for bodily comfort. Their course became erratic. The only things that never varied, except in degree, were their perpetual discomforts and their growing discontent.

That they held together so long as they did was very wonderful. It was a case of adhesion from force of outward circumstances rather than of cohesion from mutual attraction. They kept together because the man who straggled died. But such a state of things could not last. What strange results might have followed, if they had succeeded in working their way through to a land of plenty in a united whole, it is impossible to say. Imagination runs riot over it, and their wildest dreams were perhaps not too wild. But it was not to be.

They got across the stony wilderness at last only to find the promised land a greater desert still,—burnt grass, skeleton trees, water in-

deed, but no game, no cattle, no villages, and black death spread broad before them by the inhabitants who wanted none of them.

Then the storm broke. President Sunstroke, conferring gloomily in his tent with Little Mr. Crow, became aware of a tumult without. He unbuttoned the flap of his revolver and strode out to investigate; he had smoothed so many difficulties that his own temper was become like the edge of a saw.

He found a division in the camp. Men were doggedly loading themselves with packages of food from the scanty stores. "Well, what's all this?" asked the President, as he walked in among them.

"We're going back," said one. And said another, "We've had enough of this."

"Going back where?"

"To the river. We were fools ever to leave it."

"But that is folly—"

"See here, Sunstroke, we've talked it all over and we're not going on. We know what's behind and we don't know what's in front, and what's more you don't either." This came from Bourreau, who somehow still contrived to look stout and butcherly while all around were lean and sallow.

"And what's behind?" asked Little Mr. Crow quietly.

"The river, and plenty to eat."

"And a land full of savages between you and it, and nowhere to go when you get there."

"The end is the same in any case, and it's a pleasanter road. Better die full than empty."

Bourreau however took a shorter road still and died where he stood, and Sunstroke waved back the rest with his smoking revolver and tried his best to argue them out of it. Safety lay in keeping together; any

day might bring them to better country; they had gone through the worst—

"We've heard all that before," said the malcontents. "It doesn't fill one's stomach. We're going to keep together, but we're not going on. The river is still there; we're going back to it."

He could not shoot the lot. Circumstances were too much for him. "Very well," he said; "you are fools and you will die, but that is your own look out. But you take only your fair share of what is left. Now, who goes forward and who goes back?" He drew a furrow in the blackened earth with his heel. "For the River of Death, that side! For the Land of Gold, this!" and by degrees the companies drew apart.

It took time and much partisan talk to make the division complete. When at last the waverers had made up their minds the bands were as nearly as possible equal. Then Sunstroke and Mr. Crow gravely divided the stores; those for the river marched away, and gloom fell on those who remained. And wild black eyes watched the strange proceedings of the white men, and understood them, and rolled with joyful anticipation. For what is too big for one bite is sometimes possible for two, and these fierce eyes belonged to no carriers of loads but to bearers of broad-bladed spears and short spatulate swords and shields with strange devices.

In camp that night they heard constant firing from the direction in which the recalcitrants had gone, and they said to themselves that so far Sunstroke and Mr. Crow were right, and perhaps they might also be right as to better country being ahead. And next morning they took the route in higher spirits, all being at all events of one mind.

Far away to the south that day

they got a glimpse of a great white mountain covered with snow, and away in front of them rose other ridges, blue in the distance. Beyond that blue line anything might lie. They pushed on valiantly, but all around them the land lay black and stark, and apparently tenantless.

The blue ridges lost their soft outlines and resolved themselves into rugged heaps with black scarped sides as they drew nearer to them. They looked forbidding enough to guard the treasures of a New World. Their very menace was a provocation and a challenge. The wayfarers pricked up as to a trumpet-call and pushed on with new vigour.

Since they had parted from their comrades the hornet attacks in the rear had ceased; for they were no longer now in a carrier-country but in a land of warriors who delight in war for war's own sake apart from thoughts of gain. And these were at present engaged in the pleasant task of eating up the other division, till there was nothing left to eat, and then, with their appetites quickened by what they had fed on and their spears still wet, the feathered men turned for their second bite.

Experience had taught them some sharp lessons. They waited till the little column was brokenly threading its way across a lifeless rock-strewn valley. Then without a moment's warning the dead valley bristled into deadly life, and the silence was rent with yells that made thin blood run cold and mottled lean yellow cheeks with red and white.

The white men drew into a bunch and faced the rush of yelling devils with a scattering volley and deep-breathed curses. Bullets spat on rocks, and ripped through leather shields, and went softly home into glistening black bodies. Feathered faces fell twisting among the flints

and rolled there yelling still, and winged feet padded lightly over them to thrust and stab into the rolling smoke, and to hurl defiance and broad razor-blades at every spit of flame. The ground was strewn with feathered men and painted shields, with knob-kerries, spears, and swords, and yet through the smoke the place seemed all alive with them still.

But sword and spear and painted shield could not break through that ring of fire, and at last the black men drew off, and the white men had time to breathe and to look into one another's faces, and to curse more freely and to think of their wounds and wounded. Half a dozen dead there were, cloven with the broad spear heads, and half a score of wounded, Little Mr. Crow among them with a foot almost severed by a falling blade. He had bound it up as well as he could, but his face was white and he could not stand. "Make for the hills," he said, as Sunstroke came up to him. "It's your best chance."

"All in good time. They've had their soup for to-day; it'll take them some time to digest it. Now let's see to that foot. I tell you they cut, those things."

"Yes," said Little Mr. Crow, wincing again at remembrance of the cold slice of the steel. "They cut. You must get on, Sunstroke,—get on."

But on looking into matters Sunstroke decided to stop where they were for the night. There was water close at hand, and some of the wounded were past moving, yet could not be left. So they built a wall of stones from boulder to boulder, made all their preparations for an early start on the morrow, posted sentries, and lay there that night. By morning six of the wounded were dead. Before dawn they slung the others between

tent-poles and set off as quietly as possible towards the hills. It was hard travelling at best, and for the wounded deadly work. The bearers stumbled on through the half light and came to constant grief, though the poles changed hands every quarter of an hour. Sunstroke, bending over Little Mr. Crow after one such fall, found him white and senseless. He poured cognac down his throat and then took him up on his own back, and setting his teeth and bending double, breasted the ascent once more. And each time when he stopped to rest he found the tale of wounded shrunk, till the burden he carried was the only one left.

Then the sun came out, and first cheered and then smote them. They looked anxiously for their enemies but not a feather was visible.

"The soup was too hot for them," said Sunstroke cheerfully.

"Get to the hills," urged Little Mr. Crow.

But hill-distances are deceptive and the travelling was a nightmare. Before mid-day, with the hills looming close and yet a considerable way off, the men flung themselves down and declared they could go no further, and their purple-faced leader, with the veins standing out like blue cords on his temple and neck, laid his burden gently down and assented. They threw out sentinels and set to work to build a defence, but before it was half up the sentinels were running for their lives. Sunstroke set half his men to their guns and dragged and carried with the rest, and cheered and cursed them all impartially, till the breastwork fulfilled its name. Then, lying down behind it and firing through it, they stopped the rush of the feathered men again and again and again, till at last they gave it up and vanished along the hillside, and this time casualties on this

side the defence were few and of small account.

"You see," said Sunstroke, to his weary crew, "we beat them every time. When we reach the place we're going to we shall be on top all the time." To which some of them said "Ay,—when!" and the rest all thought it. But he cheered them like a born leader, and doled out provisions with as free a hand as he dared, and hoped with all his heart that the other side of the hills would bring them better faring; for at the rate at which they had eaten that day there were not two more days' provisions left.

They were up again with the dawn in a chill creeping mist, and by noon they stood under the upper strata of the cliffs. Why the black men never attacked in the morning they could not understand, but were none the less grateful.

And now, learning by experience, the voyagers cast round at once for a fortress before the next assault should be given. And there up the hillside they found it ready to their hand,—a black cavernous mouth gaping wide for them. They climbed eagerly along a narrow path, turned a corner, and found a wonder.

It was as though a great drawer had been partly drawn out from the face of the cliff and so left. The drawer was a mighty hollowed tank, forty feet wide and ten feet deep. How far it ran in under the cliff they could not see, but the effect of it, at the cliff-end, was a cavern sheltered most completely from over-observation or assault, with a forecourt enclosed by a stone rampart ten feet high. In the forecourt were native huts shaped like bee-hives, apparently unoccupied.

"We can hold that against the world," said Sunstroke, and they dropped into the enclosure.

There was none to dispute their

entry. The place was deserted, a fortress impregnable against all assaults from without. Here, if they could overcome the difficulties of the commissariat, they might rest secure for as long as they chose. They pulled down the bee-hives and rejoiced in the warmth of fires that night. The cave was dry, too dry, the floor being covered a foot deep with refuse of cattle and musty forage. It was pungent, and full of creeping things, but it made excellent bedding for stone-worn bones. They still had some water in their bottles, and they ate and drank and slept in peace, posting sentries, however, against surprise.

The night passed without disturbance, and mounting their parapet in the morning they could see no trace of their enemies. A dozen men were detailed for water-duty and set off with their bottles and rifles. Climbing the enclosure, they turned the corner of the cliff-path and disappeared. They never returned, and no sound of their ending reached the others.

The cavern was gloomy that night. They ate in silence and sparingly, and wondered what had become of their comrades. Little Mr. Crow was feverish with his wound, which was besides horribly painful for want of fresh bandages. His face was white and pinched, and at times he moaned huskily for water. Sunstroke wetted his lips with cognac, but cognac is not water and the parched lips rebelled. In the chill mist before the dawn he gathered half a dozen water-bottles, took his revolver and one of the razor-edged spatulate swords he had picked up as a keepsake, and with a whispered word slipped past the sentry and along the path.

He was back in an hour, with the bottles filled, the broad blade of the

sword sticking clammily to its sheath, and a very grim face on him. "They have built bee-hives round the water and were all snoring inside like pigs, all except one on sentry-go, and him I killed before he could cry out," he told them, and they found small comfort in it. But the water was acceptable, and they treasured it like liquid gold.

A very thoughtful man was President Sunstroke that day. He carefully explored the cavern for other outlets, but found none. It ran into the cliff a couple of hundred feet and ended abruptly. In the afternoon he called them all to council and gave them the results of his cogitations. "We are here," he said, "like rats in a trap, and whether we can break out remains to be seen. The guard I saw round the water-hole was only a guard. It is probably increased by this time. Where the rest may be I cannot say; they seem to spring out of the ground. There are two things we can do,—stop here, or try to go on. If we stop we shall starve,—unless they tire out, which is not likely."

"Fight," said one.

"Quick death is better than slow," said another.

"It is all one in the end."

And so they decided to fight their way out.

"They seem at their limpest in the early morning," said Sunstroke, "so we will go to-morrow morning. Get everything ready; we must be away before daylight."

They saw to their rifles, prepared half a dozen ambulances from the remains of the tents, slept,—those of them who could—took a hasty meal in the dark of the morning, and stole away round the mountain-path through the creeping folds of the mist. But their wily jailers had foreseen this, and much as they hated the cold

and damp they hated the white men more.

Sunstroke in the van saw a dark form loom before him in the fog and cut its yell in two with a slash of its native steel. But the mischief was done and the hillside sprang into life. The white men closed up into column of fours, with poor Little Mr. Crow in the centre, and pressed steadily on and up, shooting down everything that opposed them. Soon they were the centre of a vast howling throng. The mist bristled with leaping men and tossing arms, and the heavy spears rained like hail on the close packed ranks. It was a grim and ghastly fight and could have but one ending. They were borne back and back. They came on the turn of the winding path and broke and made for safety. Little Mr. Crow's bearers dropped him as they fell, and he lay still and waited for the end. A strong arm enfolded him and a revolver crackled above his head. He was round the turn of the path and the howling dulled suddenly in his ears. A black head came sneaking round the corner; he was bumped and bruised against the rock, and the black head went rolling down hill like a grisly football.

And so they were back in their hole, but quite half their number lay on the hillside, some dead and some miserably alive, and of those who got back scarce one but had his wounds.

That was the beginning of the end. They sat and lay in gloomy silence, no word of hope among them.

In the afternoon with a hideous flop a headless white body fell into the forecourt; another and another followed, till the ghastly pile grew high, and the survivors sat and watched and deemed them happier than themselves. Hideous birds came swooping over the dead, and their glassy eyes gleamed malevolently at

sight of the living. Sunstroke had been for heaving the bodies overboard. Now, instead, he sat inside the cavern and shot the birds, and they lighted fires and cooked them. Horrible food it was, coarse and stringy and tasting of death,—but it was food, and they had no other, and they lived on carrion-eaters for four days.

That day there was shouting on the plateau below, and from the rampart they watched the torture of their comrades by the feathered fiends. To sit and watch in silence was impossible. The range was long but they rained shot on them till the black men fled out of sight dragging their dead and wounded with them; and then Sunstroke, who was an excellent shot, devoted himself to putting the victims out of their misery.

Night brought no cessation of the horrors. Great fires blazed round the angles of the rocks below, and the shrieks of burning men rose up to the cavern. Then a figure enveloped in flame rushed wildly across the open space with gleaming spear-points spurring it on. Sunstroke shot it as it ran, and another, and another.

The next day was the same, and then, the victims being all used up, the siege settled back into its old routine. Occasionally a bird of prey came swooping down into the forecourt, exulting in its find, and none ever went away. But at last they had to get rid of the bodies, and with averted faces they dropped them one by one over the rampart. That night the rocks below were alive with a hideous crew who screamed and laughed and tore as they scratched and scrabbled over their prey, and Sunstroke, with the pangs of hunger ravening in him, made a rope of shirts and sword-belts and was let down over the rampart to the rocks. He

shot three of the sneaking brutes, and took their bodies up into the cavern. Then, greatly venturing, he gathered the water-bottles and silently descended the rocks again, but only to find the black men on the alert, and to come back empty-handed.

They suffered terribly from thirst, especially poor Little Mr. Crow, who wandered in his mind at times, and babbled of flowing streams, and yet did not die. The food, too, twisted them with internal pains, and one morning two of them lay where they had slept and knew no waking. At night their bodies went over the rampart and the survivors got two carrion-beasts in exchange.

Each day had its tale of dead, and the living envied them. Yet two only, in their misery, shot themselves; so strongly will men cling to life even under the most hopeless conditions. But one by one they dropped out and went over the rampart, and an occasional carrion-beast came back, and its flesh and blood were meat and drink to those who were left. And once again Sunstroke stole down the rocks in the chill of the dawn, and this time brought back a bottleful of muddy water from a tiny hole too small to have a guard. He could probably have got clear away in the mist, but he would not, and the muddy water went mostly to Little Mr. Crow.

Three separate times at long intervals black heads came craning round the corner of the path to see how they were getting on, and each time the owner died, and once a black hand was seen waving a bunch of grass there; but they did not understand it, and a bullet went through the hand and the grass floated sadly down the mountain-side.

One by one the starving men crept quietly into corners and died, and their bodies were dropped quietly

over the rampart in the dark, and the carrion-beasts yelled and scrabbled over them and dragged them hideously about among the rocks. And so the time came at last when of all the garrison none remained alive save Sunstroke and Little Mr. Crow; Sunstroke, because he had been the strongest of them all, and Little Mr. Crow because he had been the weakest, and Sunstroke had tended him like a brother, reserving for him the least disgusting bits of carrion, and giving him muddy water to drink when the others had only blood.

One dreadful day, when these two lay alone, the feathered men, tired of waiting, tried to carry the stronghold by assault. But Sunstroke was ready for them and the corner was a bad one for rushing. He had the rifles piled in front of him, and no man who got round the corner lived to report how many men were left in the cave. At night he crept out and tumbled the black bodies down the mountain-side, and the flesh-eaters below had a mighty feast and chilled the listeners' blood with their merriment.

They had been two whole days without bite or drink. Early each morning Sunstroke had been down among the rocks groping patiently for mud at risk of his life and had found none. The second time he could barely climb back over the rampart. They lay on the pungent flooring, Little Mr. Crow murmuring uncouth babblements in a foreign tongue, and requests for water which cut like a knife; Sunstroke with a rifle to his hand and a pile of cartridges beside it, and his eye on the path up there to the left which swung up and down in the air at times and went wavering away round the corner.

They had sucked and sucked again the bones that had been cast aside clean picked long before, and Sun-

stroke's mind had been running much on the best way of ending it. A couple of shots and it would be over. Whatever lay beyond could hardly be worse than what they were suffering. But as yet he had not been able to bring his mind to shooting Little Mr. Crow; it felt too much like cold-blooded murder.

The sun set red that night. He could not see it, for the cave faced south, but the rocks were red and the plain was red and the sky, and it seemed to him that Little Mr. Crow's face was red, which was odd because it had been so white before. But soon the red glow faded. Little Mr. Crow's face gleamed dusky white for a minute or two and then faded out. Sunstroke crept over to him and sat by his side. He took one of the limp hands in his and it felt cold.

"Water!" murmured Little Mr. Crow.

"Yes, yes, soon," said Sunstroke soothingly, as he had done a hundred times before that day.

Presently Little Mr. Crow lay quiet, and the other laid some spare tunics over him, and piled the musty forage round and over them to keep the sick man warm. And for his own comfort, and for company's sake, he lit a fire in the mouth of the cave, for he must keep watch lest the feathered men should steal in on them unawares. He dozed now and again with his hand on his rifle, starting suddenly wide awake with a jerk, and he walked at times to get himself still more awake, and chewed a bullet to quench his thirst. And when the night was chilling to the dawn, and the mist came creeping in, he took his revolver and the short sword, and a water-bottle, and let himself down by the rope over the rampart once more. "What good? what good?" he said to himself, but yet he went.

He knew by the feel now where it was useless to search. Up round there to the left was the hole where he had got water once before by killing the guard. He would try there once more; they would not be looking for him down below, and he might be able to get near enough to kill his man again before he gave the alarm. And, full of the idea, he crept along the hill-side, foot by foot, with an anxious pause between each step.

He saw the beehives looming through the mist at last, and lay waiting for sign of the watch. He crept nearer,—and still nearer,—and still saw nothing, heard nothing. He crept right up to the pool and buried his face in it. If it meant death the next minute, he could not refrain with the water right under his nose. His ears strained to bursting as he sucked it in in great eager gulps, but he heard not the slightest sound. He filled his bottle and crept silently away.

But that first full drink for many days had given him strength, and courage he had never lacked. He had got his water, and he would as lief pay for it as not. He stopped and then crept back, right up to the side of the bee-hive. There was no sound,—and he worked his way round to the front. The mat that should have covered the doorway was gone. His head was in the opening, and still he heard no sound; but he feared some trick, and he dared not go inside. The place seemed deserted, but the crawling mist on the hill-side might hide an army; black eyes, which he could not see, might be watching his every movement. The thought of it grew on his nerves. Down below were the plains; he could creep down through the mist, and on, and on, and on; by daylight he could be miles away. It

might mean life! And Little Mr. Crow! Sunstroke sat down suddenly where he stood, lest his legs should carry him off against his will.

The mist grew luminous, and the sun came out and sucked it up. He lay like a stone among the stones, and waited and watched. It was broad day; the place was deserted. Still he lay and watched. Then he got up and walked to the bee-hives. In one he found a handful of maize, and he picked up every scrap of it and nibbled a grain or two himself. For a long time he stood gazing eagerly out over the desolate plains below and saw no sign of life. Then with water in one hand and food in the other, he hastened up the hill to tell Little Mr. Crow the good news.

He could not wait till he got there, but cried to him from the path,—“Courage, Little One, the devils have gone! Here is food and drink,” and he dropped down into the forecourt. And then, as his eyes fell on Little Mr. Crow’s face, the bottle fell from his one hand, and the maize jerked out of the other; for Little Mr. Crow was dead, and had been dead for many hours.

At first he would not believe it, though the shrunken form was stiff and the face clammy cold. He had fainted, he would come round; he was asleep, he would waken. He sat staring at the white face, while his hand wandered instinctively after the grains of maize and carried them one by one to his mouth. When at last he knew that his friend was dead, and it was borne in upon him that he was alone,—the last man—he knelt beside the quiet figure and wept over it like a child. Then, when his grief was spent, he covered the body up, and taking a rifle and a bottle of water, went slowly away along the path.

Round the corner he went, and up

the mountain side. He was the Legion of the Lost; he was going to the promised land.

The sun blazed down on him, but he stumbled on among the rocks. The promised land lay just over the hill-top there; he must get on, get on. Thousand thunders! It seemed to get further away the more he climbed; but it beckoned him on, and on, and up. Just behind it lay the ——“Name of a dog! Stand still there, hill-top! Stand, I say!” He shouted to it; he threatened it with his rifle; he climbed on, and on, and up. And at last he drew his scraping feet up the crumbled flutings of the topmost ledge, and lay spent on the great plateau of the summit, where the sun smote like a hammer. And far away in front was a shimmering blue that looked like the sea.

He lay for a long time while the white sun sucked up his strength as it had sucked up the morning mist. Then he rose and stumbled on across the plain that looked so level and was so rough,—and at times his eyes were closed because of the drumming in his head, and at such times he fell and bruised himself, and rose with a muttered curse and staggered on. But he got to the other side at last and sank wearily down in a cleft of the rocks. There lay the promised land spread before him like a mighty map,—the land of his dreams and more. It was a long way down and he was too tired to seek a road. He would rest. Heavens, how hot that sun was! He tipped his bottle to his lips, but it was empty, and his thirst was doubled.

He lay back and looked out dreamily over his kingdom with half closed eyes. He saw great rolling plains covered with grass and darker stretches of forest-land. He saw a gleaming silver snake that wound in and out and broadened as it went, till it ran into the dip of the sky and was lost. He saw moving things far down below him, tiny black dots which passed to and fro, some slowly, some quickly. Up in the blue sky he saw a carrion-bird poised watchfully.

And then he saw the river darken, and the shadows begin to creep about, and everything below him was wrapped in purple mist like the bloom on a rich ripe plum,—just like those big plums that grew near the well at home in Brittany. How often he had stolen them and got cuffed for his pains. She had a heavy hand and a sounding voice, the little mother, and a heart of gold. Ay me!

The sun dipped behind the ridge on his left and the air darkened with a chill. He was very tired; he would sleep, there where he was. And to-morrow,—to-morrow,—

But when the morning mists crept round the hill-top the tale of the Lost was complete. And all that day the carrion-bird kept a watchful eye on the motionless figure which sat looking out over the plains from its cleft in the rock. And on the third day it ventured at last to drop lightly down upon the quiet head.

JOHN OXENHAM.

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A PATH IN THE GREAT WATERS.

THE little Dorsetshire town of Poole was a busy and important seaport in the year 1803. It is busy and important still, but the years which have passed so lightly over the town, have not improved the harbour. A hundred and fifty years ago, old fashioned ships of five and six hundred tons, beak-heads, poop-lanthorns and all, could lie, loaded, alongside the Great Quay, where a large Newfoundland fishing-trade was carried on; but smaller vessels lie there now, and there is less water under them. There is little change in the appearance of the place; the wooded island of Branksea, or Brownsea (it is called by both names), lies just in front of it; and island and harbour alike are enclosed by the furze-covered sand-spits which stretch out as though Hampshire on the one side were reaching out hands to Purbeck on the other to enclasp and cut off ships, harbour, town and all, from Poole Bay. But it is as easy to keep a boy shut in the nursery as to bind the landward streams that seek their way to the great sea; the boy finds his way out into the world, and the ebb-tide runs deep and fast through the channel opposite Branksea Castle.

There was then,—for aught I know, there may be still—an old tavern, which stood in a convenient position among the houses and warehouses on

the landward side of the road which skirted the Great Quay. Fifty yards or so from its open door were the stone stairs where the tides crept up and down, and ships' boats made fast, and seamen and fishermen came ashore to rest from their labours. They always rested in the same way,—leaning against whatever was convenient, with their hands in their pockets. Also they needed much liquid refreshment; for the sea, look you, is salt, and therefore a sailor in repose is usually thirsty. The little tavern stood ready to satisfy their legitimate desires, and those who were not resting outside of it were usually to be found refreshing themselves inside. On this chilly September evening, when stormy grey clouds were driving in long procession out of the south-west, and dull grey waves were keeping step with them all across the harbour, there was more attraction inside than out. The warm glow of a fire shone through the red curtains of the long room beside the bar. A sign-board, swinging from an iron bracket over the door, displayed a house-painter's impression of a fat old sloop, and the legend *The Portsmouth Packet, by William Steele*. Two hoys made the passage twice a week, one up and one down, from Portsmouth to Poole, wind, weather, and French privateers permitting; and here freights were

paid, passages booked, and goods warehoused. If the cellars sometimes contained stuff that had paid no duty to King George, that concerned nobody but the landlord and the Revenue officers; and they were kept exceedingly busy, for most of the inhabitants of the sea-coast, gentle and simple, were more or less in sympathy with the free-traders.

The Portsmouth hoy had come in early in the afternoon and was lying at the quay. An armed cutter, flying a naval pendant, had followed her, and now lay at anchor in the channel, three hundred yards out. As the sun went down (it was so hidden in leaden clouds, that nothing but the almanac announced the fact), her boat was hoisted out, and four seamen rowed the lieutenant in command to the stairs. No sooner had he disappeared up one of the narrow streets which led through the merchants' warehouses into the High Street, than two of the men made the best of their way towards the Portsmouth Packet, while the other two took the boat back to the cutter. A last hail came across the water: "Remember, you two! Skipper'll be down at eleven. You've got to be here a good quarter of an hour before; and if so be you've shipped more than you can carry, you'll pay more than the reckonin'"; and the click of the oars grew fainter as they pulled back to the cutter.

"Now then," said the elder of the two, a rough fellow in rough sea-clothes, fisherman's boots, canvas petticoat, Guernsey frock, and fur cap, "you ain't in such a blessed hurry that you can't stop for a mouthful o' rum, John Corsellis? It won't hurt you, nor yet them long togs of yourn."

The younger man was clad in the height of naval dandyism; striped

blue and white trousers falling loosely round the ankle and short enough to exhibit grey yarn stockings and buckled shoes; a short blue jacket, brass-buttoned, and open in front to show a checked shirt and loose black neckerchief; the whole crowned with a black tarpaulin hat and a carefully tied pigtail which reached almost to the hem of his jacket, or as he would have phrased it, "down to his transom."

"Ain't got time, Jim Collins; it'll take me nigh half an hour to get word to my gal up Parkstone way; and then she's got to make an excuse to get out."

"Have you got one,—like the chap in the song—at every port? There was one at Porchmouth, and the widder at Weymouth as keeps the Ship, and one at Devonport, and another at Fowey, and this one; beside others as I can't call to mind."

"Well, you see, it's like this. A chap feels lonesome like, adrift in a strange port, if he ain't got a gal's waist to take a hitch round. It's good for me, and I don't know as it does any harm to them. Reckon we're both satisfied."

"Both?" said Jim. "There's too many of 'em. That's the trouble. You're trying to command a whole fleet, and no signals either. A woman's all right while you stays on the quarter-deck and cons her yourself; but directly you're over the side, there's some other chap takes charge, and he ain't agoin' to keep station for you."

"You're nigh as doleful as them Falmouth men on the cutter, always a foretellin' disasters."

"Ain't them Falmouth men got reason to grumble? Every seaman has some rights, I reckon; but that Walker, he up and steers right through or over, hazin', bad grub, and all, just as if we was dogs."

"What are we to do then? Mutiny?"

"It might come to that. Others have done it afore."

"Yes, and been laid by the heels. I ain't no ways wishful to get five hundred round the fleet, or be hanged, —like them Albanaises what we saw to Plymouth."

"Don't you intend to do nothing, then?"

"Yes; I'm goin' to see my gal."

"That's you all over, John. You keep no look out ahead, and you won't shift your helm for anything that's a-coming; ram jam, right ahead, never take no thought!"

"Life ain't like a purser's cheese, with all the profit in the parin's. There's no sense in shortenin' sail to-day because it may come on to blow to-morrow. Carry on and make a passage, that's my way of it; time enough to snug down when the squall comes. Here, take a drink and cheer up. Off she goes!" and Corsellis set off up the Parkstone Road as fast as his sea-legs could carry him, while Collins bore up for the Portsmouth Packet.

The type to which John Corsellis belonged was not uncommon among the curiously diversified seamen of that date. Curly-haired (save for the pigtail), blue-eyed, and well-grown, the son of a broken-down hard-drinking Cornish seaman, he had shipped, as a ragged boy, on board of a West-country privateer, and had been pressed into the Navy at eighteen. Afloat he was a quiet, disciplined, capable seaman; ashore he was as mischievous and irresponsible as a monkey. He had no more ambition than a sheep, no more book-learning than a jackass, and no less courage than a bull-dog. To fear God and honour the King,—both at a respectful distance,—to obey orders, and to hate a Frenchman as the Devil, were

the principal articles of his simple creed. To risk his life for prize-money, to grumble because there was no more of it, and then fling it away as if the hard-earned coins were drops of water, was his practice. He had no sentimental affection for the sea, but he loved a comfortable ship and a good sea-boat. The shore to him was a place of relaxation, where sailor-men went for a spree because liquor and girls were to be found there; of the joys of home or domestic happiness he had no more conception than a sea-gull. He had neither thrift nor forethought, but he would do nothing that he considered mean or dirty. In his dealings with beauty the tenderness of his heart was only equalled by the toughness of his conscience, and in love he was constant as the needle to the Pole,—but with a very considerable allowance for deviation. He was ignorant, reckless, and intemperate, but his vices harmed few beside himself, while his rough virtues were of the highest value to the nation. Meanwhile, he was one of that obscure body of seamen who were building up the British Empire, while nine-tenths of the people sang their praises, and the other tenth stole their money.

A fairly numerous company was assembled in the long room to the left of the bar when Jem Collins entered, townsmen, fishermen, and seamen. There were oaken tables and benches; a high-backed settle stood on each side of the fire-place, and William Steele, the landlord, stood with his back to it, pipe in hand. He was in his shirt-sleeves, his apron twisted up round his waist, and his striped waistcoat with its deep-flapped pockets tied tightly with strings across the place where the small of his back had once been. Big, taciturn, and stolid, he fanned the smoke away with his hand, before

he nodded to Collins and gave him good-evening.

"Are you from the cutter, mate?"

"Aye, aye, King's cutter *Piemy*,—just brought the skipper ashore."

"Who commands her now?" asked the landlord.

"Lootenant Walker, since last March, when Jerry Coghlan was moved into the *NIMBLE*."

"Walker?" said the landlord slowly. "'Twas Walker that had the *NIMBLE* before, wasn't it?"

"So 'twas. I'll take a glass of rum and a pipe o' tobacco, thankee. He've got us now, worse luck."

"What's wrong with Walker, then?"

"Walker? He's in too much of a hurry to make his fortune. He's got a wife and kid ashore at Dartmouth. Kid's one year old, but I'm blest if Walker ain't got him on the cutter's books a'ready and rated A.B. More'n that, he sent one of the hands up to Portsmouth in the kid's name, to draw the five-pound bounty; give him a crown, he did, to hold his tongue, and put the rest in his own pocket. Half our stores goes ashore to his house, and we gets salt herrin's and any sort of truck to make out with. He's a reg'lar hung-in-chains, so he is. Somebody's got to get even with Mr. Lootenant Walker one of these days, and it'll be a full day's job too."

"Is the press hot in Portsmouth, mate?" enquired a long-voyage man, a Southseaman, as they were called at that time.

"Nothin' to speak of now; but, Lord, you should have seen it three months back! Cleared every ship in the Camber, they did, and the skippers left all alone, in charge."

"Cleared the theatre too, didn't they?"

The cutter's man grinned, as one who recalls a pleasant memory. "No,

that was at Plymouth,—took 'em all out of the gallery, at the Dock Theatre,—on'y left the women to see the show."

"Weren't the town pretty wild about it?"

"Not they! There was a broken head or two, but all taken in good part; and we was complimented in the newspaper."

"Ugh!" grumbled an undersized townsman in top-boots, "and they calls this a free country!"

"'Twouldn't be so for long, if 'twasn't for the fleet as keeps Boney away; and ships ain't much use without men to work 'em. But I allow it was curious how easy folk took it. Now, if it had been a Revenue job, seizin' contraband stuff, like as not there'd have been shootin' and a lot of poor fellows hurt and killed. Here we was, takin' the men themselves, and no more than a rough-and-tumble, say no more about it, and never a weapon shown, on'y a stick or two."

"That's right and proper enough," said an old fisherman. "Someone's got to fight the French, and shut 'em up in Bullong. Admiral Nelson hisself can't do it without men, and we know we've all got to go, if so be King George wants us."

"Well, don't he want his taxes and duties, and what not?"

"Not he! He've a got millions. What do a little bit o' tea and spirits matter to he? 'Tis nothin' to him; but 'tis our livin', and bread and butter for the kids. We can spare the men; like enough they'd on'y be in mischief if they was ashore. But as for them Revenue swine, as goes about sneakin' and spyin' how to steal poor men's goods and jail 'em,—there, I'd drown the lot, if I'd my way of it!"

There was a general murmur of approval.

"Damnation to all Custom-house

and Revenue men, says I," growled another man, and the sentiment seemed popular.

"Time of peace is a bad time for free-traders," observed a quiet tradesman-like man in snuff-brown, with knee-breeches and buckled shoes. "While the war was on the cruisers were busy lookin' for the Frenchmen; directly the peace was declared, they'd nothing to do, so all the lot, frigates, sloops and all, was set to hunt the smugglers."

"D'ye remember Billy Swayne?" said another. "He was the man that owed 'em a grudge."

"Ah!" said the landlord, meditatively. "I only clapped eyes on Billy Swayne once, when me and Joe, my man, went over so far as Falmouth, about,—well, about a bit of business. He didn't use this coast at all,—at no time, he didn't—but I see him then. Billy always said 'twas no fair capture; that's what made him so wild, according to what I was told."

"Couldn't well have been no fairer as I can see," chuckled the old fisherman. "They took Billy, and they took his boat, and they took his cargo; and they fined him all the money he'd got, and give him six months as well. He'd ought to ha' been satisfied."

"No, 'twasn't that; but they'd altered the law. Up to July last year contraband couldn't be seized outside the four-league line. Billy had been over on the French side a goodish while, and the *SWIFT*,—that was his boat, a sweet cutter that had been the *BONAPARTE*, a French privateer—sailed out of Granville the very day they got word over that the limit was to be eight leagues. A easterly gale blowed him fair out of the Channel, and it took him a matter of ten days to beat back. When he was six leagues off the Dodman, up

comes the *NIMBLE* cutter. Knowin' he was well outside, Billy took no notice, and let 'em come aboard. There was the stuff, five hundred tubs, just under the hatches when they raised 'em. 'This is seized,' says Walker; and Billy looks at him and laughs. 'Yours is a dirty business, Lutenant,' he says, 'but you might so well take the trouble to learn it. I reckon I'm all of six leagues out.' 'That would ha' been all right a week ago, my man,' says Walker, 'but it's eight leagues now, and I've got you.' They say,—them as was there—that Billy swore till the head-sheets fair rattled and shook—him bein' hove to; but anyway they took him; and he took his oath he'd have Walker's life, for chousin' him like that."

"Billy was a hard man, for sure!" said the fisherman. "They say he run down a Custom's boat once, and never stopped to pick 'em up. He'd sunk his tubs, and buoyed 'em. 'If it's the stuff they're seekin',' he says, 'let 'em go to the bottom and find it.'"

"How many hands might you have aboard the *PIGMY* now?" asked one. "I heard say they took all the men out of the small craft when the war begun again, to man the line-of-battle ships."

"So they did, last June; some of ours was turned over to the *CANOPUS*, and some to the *VILL-DE-PARREY*. Left us with on'y a dozen, they did; that would ha' been the time for your Billy Swayne to come ath'art us. But we was in Falmouth a week later, lookin' for men; and a score or more came to Walker when he was ashore, volunteered for the *PIGMY*, and got the bounty,—said they'd belonged to a letter-of-marque as was taken by a French privateer. The Frenchmen took the guns, ammunition and arms out of her,—made us laugh a bit, it did—took the mate

too, for a keepsake like—and then ransomed the ship for a hundred and sixty pounds. So they took her home, and was turned adrift.”

“Did they say what ship?”

“Let’s see, something out of Plymouth. Ah! JOSEPH AND GRACE,—that’s what it were.”

“Dunno how that could be,” said a seamen. “I heard tell in Plymouth that the JOSEPH AND GRACE had been re-armed, and sent to sea in a hurry to get the owners’ money back; and the crew was kept on,—so *they* said.”

“I expect Walker wanted the men more than the story,” said Collins; “any way he took ’em.”

The wild south-west wind that swept the Channel and wreathed the headlands of Purbeck with flying rain-clouds, drove many to shelter from its violence that night. It drove John Corsellis, wet and happy, with his sweetheart’s kisses tingling on his lips, into the Portsmouth Packet, accompanying him into the house with a rush of wind and rain that slammed the doors and guttered the candles. With a louder howl and a stormier swirl of rain it ushered in another of the cutter’s crew, who came to call his shipmates to their waiting boat. They asked him to drink, and turning to give his order, he encountered the landlord’s dull eyes fixed upon him in a steady stare. For a moment the two looked at each other in silence; then, turning his back on Steele, the newcomer, without a word, went out again into the wind and the darkness. The other two paid their shot, and followed him.

It was just eleven. First one guest, and then another, announced that he was “for home-along;” and with many noisy *good-nights* plunged into the foul weather outside. When all had departed, and the potman was closing the house, Steele went to

the door and stood for a while, half sheltered behind it. He saw the lanthorn brought from the boat to the quay-edge, to guide the cloaked lieutenant down the slippery stairs. He heard the order, “Give way, men!” and the smack of the oars as they fell together on the water. Then the dancing boat moved, a shadowy shape, across the tide, breaking up its wavering reflections. It reached the cutter, and the swaying lanthorn passed up the side and disappeared, while the cutter’s riding light swung mistily across the dark shadow of Branksea Island.

“Joe!”

“What is it, Guv’nor?”

“You saw that chap that came in just before closing, and went out again in a hurry?”

“I did.”

“Did you ever see him afore?”

“Not as I knows on, Guv’nor.”

“Think again, Joe. The man were clean-shaved. Well, put a pair of whiskers on that face, most big enough to cover it; put gold rings in his ears, and clap a skirt and gilt buttons on that jacket of his. D’ye know him now?”

“Can’t say I do, Guv’nor. Who is he?”

“I shouldn’t wonder, Joe, if there was goin’ to be trouble aboard the *Pigmy* cutter, for that there man was Billy Swayne.”

The hired armed cutter, *Pigmy*, as she was officially described, was a boat of about a hundred and forty tons, stoutly built of oak. She was eighteen years old, painted black and yellow, with a round bow and a square transom, surmounted by a counter so short that it looked like a cornice. Her bowsprit was very long, and the mainsail had a square head with little peak to it. The topmast carried a square topsail, and

on the lower topsail-yard was set a kind of boom-foresail, goosewinged across the forestay, with the clews hauled out to the ends of a swinging boom, hoisted half way up the lower mast. On her deck, twenty-three feet wide, she carried two long six-pounders and ten twelve-pounder carronades. The officer's cabin was aft, a little box of a place only five feet and a half high, with a narrow table in the middle and cabins on each side for the lieutenant and the master. Forward of that was another cabin with standing berths on each side for the warrant-officers and the two midshipmen; and the berth-deck of the crew, some forty men, took up all the rest of her. The main hatch-way admitted light and air to the berth-deck, and a skylight and a small companion-way served for the quarters aft. There was very little room on her deck, for the boat and spare spars filled the space between the companion and the main-hatch, while the carronades and slides left but a narrow gangway on each side of them.

About the end of September the *Pigmy* was on her regular cruising ground in the chops of the Channel, working slowly to windward against a light westerly wind. She was short-handed, for she had captured and sent in a small privateer and a brig, and both the midshipmen and a dozen of the crew had been sent away in charge of them. The privateer had shown fight, wounded two men, and sent a shot through the bottom of the boat: the carpenter's patches had leaked badly; and as the weather was fine the boat was towing astern to allow the new seams to "take up." The wind was falling light and the horizon was hazy, with low flat clouds that threatened fog.

"I think I shall haul up for

Plymouth to-morrow, Mr. Martin," said Walker, as he took a fisherman's walk (five steps and overboard) with the master about sundown. "We're too short-handed to do any good, and the men we've got are the worst I've ever sailed with. Boatswain tells me they answered him back and threatened him when he went forward to stop a row this afternoon."

"That's the Falmouth lot, sir; the sooner we get them under the guns of a frigate the better I shall be pleased. I'm sorry you didn't send some of them away in the prizes and keep our old trusties aboard here."

"If I had, like as not we'd never have seen men or prizes again. How could I send away these blackguards in charge of a midshipman? They're half-mutinous now."

"That's so, sir; and that reminds me of something. I met the boatswain of the *NIMBLE* ashore in Plymouth, and he asked me if it was true that we'd shipped a crew of smugglers. Said he'd heard talk about it ashore."

"Smugglers, eh?" said Walker thoughtfully. "Well, it's possible. I was pretty busy in the *NIMBLE* and seized a good few cargoes. There's plenty of smugglers that owe me a grudge; and hang me if I haven't thought once or twice that I'd seen some of their ugly faces before. We'll keep watch and watch till we get in, Mr. Martin. See that none but the old hands come aft to take the helm; we'll keep those brutes forward. Send the gunner to me in the cabin; and mind you, turn in all standing, ready for a call."

The fog thickened. When the watch was changed at midnight and the master relieved the lieutenant, a sudden noise broke out forward, a noise of loud voices and

struggling feet. The first of the watch to come on deck was Corsellis. He came up hurriedly, hatless, without a jacket, and bare-footed, and went aft at once to relieve the helm. The noise ceased as suddenly as it began, and the rest of the watch passed forward, a blur in the fog about the mast. There was not wind enough to keep a course, and the boom swung slowly in-board.

"Wind's died right away, sir; she won't steer."

"Then we must just wait till the breeze comes again and blows this filthy fog clear," said the master. "Hullo! What's the matter with your face? It's bleeding; and where's your hat and jacket?"

"Bit of a row forward, sir. They was tryin' to prevent the old hands comin' on deck."

"They,—who?"

"Them Falmouth men, sir. I broke through 'em; and I'm just as glad to be on deck, jacket or no jacket, wet or dry, for I think the Devil's broke loose aboard this ship."

"What do you mean?"

"Was all the arms returned after the action with the privateer, sir?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Because I see cutlasses and pistols down forward just now."

"Good Lord!" said the master. "Look here, if that's so, you'd best speak up plain. Do you think there's going to be trouble to-night?"

"Dunno what to think, sir. I don't like the look of it."

The master took a turn across the deck. Then, bidding Corsellis keep his eyes open, and sing out lively if he saw any of them coming aft, he went below. Presently a faint light glimmered through the skylight; it could not be seen from forward, because the companion-way was between, but the fog seemed to glow with it. In a few minutes the master re-

turned, wearing his sword, followed by Walker, the gunner, and the boatswain, each with a couple of loaded muskets which they stowed carefully on the top of the companion-hatch, with a coat over them to keep the primings dry. All were armed.

"Is the door in the forward bulk-head secured, sir?" asked the master in a low voice.

"The carpenter's screwing it up now," said Walker. "Here he is. All fast, Carpenter?"

"Yes sir; but they've just been trying the door."

"Slip forward quietly, two of you, and see if you can clap the hatch on. It's better to tackle one watch at a time, if we can."

The carpenter and boatswain crept forward keeping under the shelter of the bulwark. They reached the hatchway unobserved, but as they laid hands on the cover a voice hailed them from forward. "Let that hatch be, d'ye hear? Below there! Tumble up quick!"

There was a rush of men up the hatchway, and the two warrant-officers ran aft and seized each a musket. They took the port side; the rest held the starboard.

"Who is that that dares give orders on my ship?" shouted Walker. "Why are you laying aft? Go forward to your duty!"

"Duty be damned! I'll attend to my duty and you too, presently. Who am I? I'm Billy Swayne, I am, the man you robbed and ruined, you swindling thief! You thought you was damned clever that day; but I'm cleverer than you, you cuckoo, and you never knowed me. You're a-going to know me now. Listen to me, you there, aft. It's the lootenant I want; I'm goin' to twist his neck. The rest of you would as lief save your lives as not, I reckon. Give me Walker, and I'll set the rest of you safe ashore

in a French port. Resist, and I'll make a *HERMIONE* job of it."

No one answered. There was a heavy flap of canvas and the boom swung out on the port side to the stretch of the sheet, and brought up with a jerk; the breeze was coming.

"Now then, you!" growled Swayne again. "It's life or death, no less. What's your answer?"

"Here's mine!" roared the gunner, and let fly at Swayne, missing him and killing a man behind him.

Walker and the rest followed with a straggling volley. Two or three of the mutineers dropped, but the rest replied with a dozen scattered pistol-shots, and the gunner collapsed against the port bulwark, shot through the heart.

"Take the boat, sir! It's our only chance," cried Corsellis, letting go the tiller.

"Haul her up on the starboard quarter in case we want her," said Walker. "Stand by, all of you! Here they come!"

The rush of the mutineers was beaten back on the weather side; but the carpenter, left alone, was driven across the deck, and the defenders were penned into the starboard quarter. Corsellis hauled the boat up. A light puff of air filled the mainsail, and left to herself, the cutter ran up into the wind with everything shivering.

"Now, Mr. Martin," said Walker; "you first, and be quick about it."

Martin dropped into the boat; he was a thickset, heavy man, and his weight depressed her bows; she took a sudden sheer across to port, where some of the mutineers were clustered. One of them,—Jim Collins—threw his leg over the rail, and, reaching out, caught the master by the collar. Martin clutched his wrist, and tried to draw a pistol; but a shot fired over Collins's shoulder struck him in

the head, and he fell backwards into the boat, dragging Collins over the stern after him.

Swayne dodged under the boom and rushed at Walker, followed by half-a-dozen more; but the boatswain brought his cutlass down on Swayne's shoulder and clinching, the two rolled together on the deck. The carpenter lay across a carronade, with his skull split.

Suddenly the mainsail filled on the other tack. The boom swung heavily over to starboard, with a clatter of blocks, and brought up with a jerk that shook the ship. Walker, who was standing on the rail waiting his chance to jump, received the full weight of the boom on the side of his head and went overboard. Corsellis, trying to haul the boat across, was kneeling on the slack of the sheet and was thrown clear over the counter as it sprang taut, losing hold of the painter as he fell. The boat dropped astern and was lost in the fog as the cutter forged slowly ahead.

Corsellis was a very indifferent swimmer at the best of times; and now, breathless from a hand-to-hand fight, he had little hope of saving himself. The cold was numbing. The sea had seemed smooth enough from the deck of the cutter; but a long swell was rolling in from the Atlantic which appeared overwhelming to a swimmer who could scarcely keep his head above water. Even without his jacket and barefooted, his clothes hampered him. The cutter was under way; there was no chance of reaching her, even if it had been safe to do so. His only chance, and that a poor one, was to follow the run of the sea and find the drifting boat; she could not be many yards away. The breeze was freshening and already the fog was shredding away, driving past in long fantastic wreaths like ghostly winding-sheets.

It was only a surface fog, and as it thinned a ray of moonlight silvered it, but it clung clammily to the water and he could see no further than the round back of the last roller that had swept past him and dropped him into the hollow behind it. The temptation to hurry his stroke was almost overpowering; but he retained sufficient self-control to resist it, for he dared not exhaust the little strength that was left him. At the end of five or six minutes he was getting his breath in short gasps and sinking lower and lower. As he was borne up on the shoulder of one long black wave he caught a glimpse of the bow of the boat, hove up upon the back of the next; and as the sea swept from under him and he sank into the valley behind it she was almost over his head. The painter was trailing over the bow and he caught it and tried to drag himself up; but as he lifted his arm to clutch the gunwale he went down and drank deep. A second time he tried, and caught it, but his numbed fingers could not keep their hold and he sank again. Blind and choking he snatched at it once more; and this time a hand caught him by the wrist and hauled him up till he got both arms over the gunwale. Then his leg was seized and dragged over the side. He rolled into the bottom of the boat utterly exhausted, and lay there, scarcely conscious if he were alive or dead.

He was soaked and shivering, yet there was comfort in the sense of rest after extreme exhaustion. Lying there, still almost upon the borderland of this world and the next, he had an experience that was new to his happy-go-lucky existence. He thought, and, so far as he was able, he thought seriously. Death had been face to face with him, stared him in the eyes, and passed him by; death by the bullet, by the steel, and

by the cold black water. They had encountered before, but never before had he seen him so close, so busy, and so sudden. He had caught a glimpse of great mysteries that were strange and terrible to him. Not poppy nor mandragora could restore to him the light heart of yesterday; the every-day world had suddenly grown strange and unfamiliar. Later he remembered one thing which seemed curious; among all the sudden and violent forms death had assumed, he had foreborne to show himself in the grim shape in which he was to come at last.

Presently he dragged himself up with one arm over the bow thwart, and looked round him. Sitting in the stern sheets was Jim Collins, his elbows on his knees and his chin resting on his hands; the master's cutlass lay across his lap and a pistol was handy on the seat beside him. Between them lay the body of the master, like a broken doll; his legs over one thwart, his head thrust forward by another; dead surely, for only death could leave a man so hideously a-sprawl.

Collins looked across at him, grinning in the moonlight. "What cheer, messmate? You was pretty nigh gone when I ketched hold of you, wasn't you?"

Dazed as he was, the rage of the fight still flickered up in Corsellis's muddled brain. "You're a bloody mutineer, Jem Collins. We've been mates, you and me, since we shipped, but by the Lord! I'll hang you if ever we gets ashore."

"That's good quarter-deck talk, John, and does you credit. But how was you going to do it?"

"I know enough to hang you, you'll allow; and I'll give my evidence."

"And what do you suppose I'd be doin' the while, John? We're messmates, says you, and I reckon I've

saved your life, and no one more surprised than me when you come cruisin' alongside like a mermaid. But I ain't goin' to let you hang me, not yet awhile, I ain't. I've got a tongue, haven't I? And I can kiss the book as well as another. Over and above that, I can spin a sight better yarn than what you can."

"What d'ye mean?"

"Just this. If I'm hanged for a mutineer, where was you, do you suppose? If I swear you was in it, where's your evidence? Who'll speak for you? Not Walker, for he's overboard; I saw him go. Not the master, here, for he's dead as nits. So was the rest of 'em by what I see; and if not, Swayne won't give 'em a chance to talk. The three as wouldn't join saw nothing, for they was lashed in their hammocks below; and you may take your Bible oath that Swayne and his lot won't tally on to your yarn."

"It's the truth!"

"Ah! and truth is truth, says you. So 'tis; but a lie's better if it seems more likely. Seems to me, we're shipmates still, my lad, and sink or swim together. Now it's no use our pulling ourselves to bits trying to overhaul the cutter. She ain't looking for us, and it's breezin' up an' she's goin' at the rate of knots. We're all of thirty mile from the nearest land, and that's French, Morlaix or thereabouts; and that's where Swayne'll make for, for he's known there, so he said. We daren't be picked up by one of our cruisers, for that's death, my son, and you may lay to it. What we want is a Frenchman or a neutral, and blessed quick too, or we'll starve aboard this here boat. And look-a-here, John, the sooner we gets rid of that," he nodded at the body of the master, "the better for all concerned."

Corsellis took no notice. He was

shivering, and not with cold and wet alone. Until Collins spoke he had not realised his danger; now he was looking down a long vista of ugly possibilities; at the end of them all was some one swinging from a yard-arm, and the figure seemed familiar.

Collins emptied the dead man's pockets; a silver watch disappeared inside his jacket, and dividing a few guineas and some silver into two portions, he offered one to Corsellis.

"No," said Corsellis, shivering; "it's blood-money."

"I don't deny that's a right and proper way for you to look at it, shipmate. You hadn't as good reason to hate Walker, not by half, as what I had; you never had your back scratched. Howsomever, there's no sense in pitching good money overboard, so I'll keep it. Over he goes!" And with a strong heave he rolled the master's body over the side.

Loyalty, with Corsellis, was neither a settled principle nor an emotion. A sea-waif from his youth up, he had acquired it as a habit. When the habit was rudely interrupted by the mutiny he had no deep or settled conviction to hold him straight; he could only follow the lead of the shipmate who was stronger and cleverer than he, and it was his instinct to obey orders. If Collins told him that it was death for him to set foot again on a King's ship, where he might be recognised as one of the *Pigmy's* crew,—well, that was hard, for after all he had done the best he could. But Collins was a long-headed chap and knew more than most. They must stick together and wait for a fair wind. Collins would know how to work a traverse by-and-by, and get back. Plenty of other good men had been mixed up in the recent mutinies, and under a cloud; and lots of them had gone back to their duty, and

fought for the King as they ought. They were on a lee-shore now, no doubt; all they could do was to stand on under easy sail, and keep the lead going; and anyway Collins was in charge.

They spoke little, keeping watch and watch till day broke. Afterwards they starved and dozed by turns; till about two in the afternoon, Corsellis, his teeth chattering in his head with the chill of a dozen hours in dripping clothes, pointed away to the southward. "Jim, there's a sail away yonder. What shall we do?"

"Take the oars till we can make her out. If she's one of our cruisers, we've got to keep out of sight. If she's a trader or a Frenchman, well and good; but it's the yard-arm for us to be taken aboard a cruiser. You've good eyes, John; what do you make of her?"

"Top-sail schooner. We ain't got a many schooner cruisers; likely she's French."

"Lord send it is so! Don't let her come too near till we're sartain sure."

The absence of a pendant reassured them a little. Perhaps twenty hours without food inclined them to take chances; the schooner was steering to pass close by them, and presently they put up an oar with a jacket on it. The schooner hove-to close to them, and they pulled alongside. They were in luck; it was a French privateer, hailing from St. Malo; a well-known one too, the MALOUINE, Captain L'Orient.

The captain could speak a little English, and Collins told him as much as was convenient for him to know; but the yarn would not have satisfied a child.

"*C'est bien curieux*," said the captain, with a shrug. "I find you out here, *en pleine mer*, in man-of-war boat, ze bottom all bloody, *hein*? I

do not tink you care to go ashore in English port. Dey hang you up, eh? If I take you to France, dey put you in prison, two, tree years, for example. Better to remain wiz me. Many of my *équipage*,—crew, you say—away in prizes, and I have need of Englishman to respond to English hail, see? Vat you say?"

Collins looked at Corsellis; but this was a situation for which Corsellis's training had prepared him. He spat carefully on the sacred quarter-deck, looked the Frenchman straight in the face, and expressed the traditional sentiment of the British Navy. "I'll see you damned first, from truck to keelson, I will, and from fashion-piece to wing-transom; and not then I won't, you frog-eatin' *mounseer*!" Again he spat ceremoniously on the planks to mark his peroration; then crossing the deck with the grace and dignity of a three-decker in a tide-way, leaned against the rail, folded his arms, and scowled, as bitterly as his boyish features would permit, at the indignant Frenchman.

The captain half drew his sword, spluttering threats, but Collins, speaking low, appeased him. "He ain't quite right in his head, *mounseer*. He was queer-like in the boat, and he's wet to the skin. Don't you go for to put him in irons. Leave him to me, and I'll argey with him; he'll do what I say."

"Ver' well," said L'Orient. "If he stop foolish, dere will always be time to imprison him when I go in. I give him two, tree days. Now go forward."

The discipline of a privateer was more elastic than that of a man-of-war, and for the next week the two masterless men went about the ship much as they pleased. They messed with the crew forward, and turned in at night into two of the spare

hammocks, doing no duty and standing no watch. But all Collins's arguments failed to move Corsellis. He absolutely refused to enter as a privateersman, and was firm in his determination to go to prison as soon as the *MALOUINE* put in to a French port, always provided that he could not give them the slip first. He never got the chance to do either. A West Indiaman was captured and sent in, and he watched for an opportunity to smuggle himself on board of her, to take his chance as one of her crew; but Collins and he were confined below during the chase, and only allowed on deck after the prize-crew had sailed with her.

One morning, when the grey mist thinned off the sea, a man-of-war brig loomed largely through the haze, not three miles away; and the *MALOUINE*, only half-manned, crowded all sail to a light easterly wind to escape, while the brig set every stitch that would draw in chase. The *MALOUINE* was foul, and her heels were clogged, but mast-wedges were knocked up, standing rigging slackened, sails wetted, and she kept out of range for six hours, neither pursuer nor pursued doing more than five knots. At about three in the afternoon the brig had closed to less than a mile distance on the weather-quarter of the *MALOUINE*, and a red flash came from her starboard bow port, followed by a tumbling cloud of white smoke, and the scream of a six-pound shot. As the heavy thud of the report passed echoing away a spout of spray rose within two hundred yards of the Frenchman's stern, and the ricochetting ball almost reached her. The *MALOUINE*'s four-pounders were as yet unequal to the range; but a few minutes later a shot from the brig passed through the foot of the mainsail, and an answering shot from

the Frenchman knocked some splinters from the brig's bulwarks. Only two or three guns could be brought to bear on either ship, but they were served for all they were worth. A well-aimed shot from the brig killed two and wounded three more of one gun's crew, dismounting the gun, and every minute brought the brig nearer. She was steering a course that would bring her abreast of the chase at about a hundred yards distance, and already the four forward guns on her starboard side were in action. The two renegades kept out of the way, well forward by the windlass.

"Now look you here, John," said Collins, alert and apparently as confident as ever, though his voice shook with excitement. "That chap's sartain to run us aboard. If it comes to boardin' you and me go below and stop there. When we're taken, we'll up and tell 'em straight that we're prisoners. You mind the West Indiaman we sent in? *WHITE SWAN* of London, Wilson master, homeward bound from Jamaiky, forty days out; that were our ship, and we was not allowed to go with the rest, along of the schooner bein' shorthanded."

"How about the Frenchmen? Won't they split on us? Pretty slack yarn, ain't it?"

"What in thunder are we to do else? Our necks are fair in a halter as you may say, and the rope rove. It's just a bare chance to get 'em out. There ain't no yarn as we can spin that's anyway ship-shape; we're all aback and our luck's dead out."

"Why not tell 'em the real yarn?"

"'Cause no one'd believe it. If it's true as Gospel it's no use if it don't seem so. Hi! Look-a-yonder! By the Lord, we've a chance yet!"

A lucky shot had struck the brig's lee main-yard arm, and carried it away close to the slings. Half the main-course and main-topsail folded

up like a broken kite; the brig staggered and lost way, while a yell of triumph came from the Frenchmen crowded aft. Their triumph was soon ended. A shot, ranging high as the brig rose on the swell, struck the schooner's fore-topmast just above the cap and cut it right out of her. Topsail, topgallant-sail, and a raffle of spars and rigging went over the side and towed there heavily. The flying jib, its halliards cut through, dropped into the sea and dragged from the jib-boom end; the jib ran bagging and fluttering down with the stay; the schooner would neither sail nor steer.

The Frenchmen rushing to the lee-rail hacked at the wreck with axes and cutlasses; Collins, scrambling over the forecastle barricade, dropped into the head and went out on the foot-rope to cut the flying-jib clear, followed by Corsellis. The tack was foul round the jibboom-end, but he hacked through rope, canvas, and all, and the sail fell, fouled the bob-stay, and gathered in thick folds round the stem.

"Clear the blasted thing, can't you?" roared Collins. Corsellis scrambled down the head-rails on the lee-side, and supporting himself by the hempen cable hanging from the hawse-hole, tried to drag the sail clear.

The big eighteen-gun brig ranged up to windward, not sixty yards away. Three or four of the schooner's larboard guns were fired in a straggling broadside; but a volley of musketry rattled across her deck, and Collins doubled up over the jibboom. The full broadside of the brig crashed into the schooner. There was a blaze of flame, a stunning roar, and a shock like an earthquake. The whole afterpart of the schooner opened out like a basket, and rolling once or twice drunkenly, she went down, leaving only a few

fragments of scorched wreckage, and a cloud of fat black smoke hanging over them.

The brig's boats were lowered and pulled across and across that reeking patch of sea. There were many dead, scorched and mutilated, but only two living men; Collins, shot through the body and bleeding to death, and Corsellis, supporting himself and his unconscious messmate on the wreck of the fore-topmast.

"Name of that schooner?" said the officer in charge.

Corsellis, busy with Collins's wound, answered at once: "French privateer *MALOUINE*, sir, Captain L'Orient."

"And how the devil do you, an Englishman, come to be aboard of her?"

Corsellis remembered his instructions. "Prisoners, sir. Taken in the *WHITE SWAN* of London, Captain Wilson, from Jamaica."

"You've got your story pat. There's never a French privateer afloat that hasn't got two or three such prisoners. See any more, men? Give way, then."

Collins was carried below to the surgeon, and soon after, a man was sent to fetch Corsellis. "Your mate's slipping his wind," he said; "he wants to see you."

Collins was sinking fast. The surgeon was busy and the two were left together.

"John—that you? I can't see—I'm sorry—I got you into this mess. I meant—for the best. Tell 'em the truth—take care of yourself. Send—for an officer—I'll speak for you—all I can."

"Too late, Jim," said Corsellis. "I've told 'em the yarn you said, *WHITE SWAN* and all!"

"My God—then you're on the rocks, John—and it's me that put you there! John—I'm goin'—I've no time—say you forgive me."

"Lord, yes, Jim. Take a turn, mate, and hold on!" But Jim was gone.

They gave Corsellis a dry rig-out, and left him for a while to his own reflections. He had never contracted the habit of thinking, and now, though he tried to face his position and think out some rational course of action, he could not keep his mind from wandering. Poor Jim! An hour ago he had been a strong man; now, he was, what? Dead? Aye—that's what they called it. It didn't matter to him now, how things went,—even if he knew. But for himself, Corsellis! He'd better face it. Why, if things went ill with him, it might be his turn next! To be hanged,—ugh! Jim had better luck, to go easy in his hammock, chaplain or no chaplain.

A man touched him on the shoulder. "I'm master-at-arms aboard this brig," he said; "you're to come to the captain."

With his one epaulette on the left shoulder, Commander Pulling of the *KANGAROO* brig, was seated at the cabin-table, his first-lieutenant standing by his side.

"What is your name?"

"John—Ellis, sir." It was the first name that came into his head.

"What was the schooner?"

"*LA MALOUINE*, sir, privateer of St. Maloes, Captain L'Orient."

"What was her force?"

"Ten four-pounders and about fifty men, sir, but many of 'em was away in prizes; there wasn't more than thirty aboard."

"According to your statement you, and the man who was picked up with you, belonged to a prize of hers, the *WHITE SWAN*, West Indiaman, eh!"

Corsellis hesitated, his hands clenched tight, before he muttered huskily, "Yes, sir."

"You'll have to stand your trial for

being on board an enemy's privateer, you know. If your story is true, it will be at the Old Bailey; but if, as I suspect, you're a deserter from the Navy, it will be a court-martial. Better say nothing till you get legal advice."

For the first month Corsellis was confined in the civil prison, but his pitiless destiny was untiring and would not leave him long even in so much peace as may be found in gaol. A cartel arrived from Morlaix with exchanged prisoners, and she brought news of the mutiny of the *Pigmy*. The mutineers had taken her into Morlaix, and had at once dispersed; it was supposed that many of them had entered in various privateers of that port and St. Malo. The boat-swain, who was found on board severely wounded, reported that the lieutenant, master, gunner, and carpenter had been murdered. There was a parade of all the prisoners in the gaol a few days later, when Corsellis was recognised by half-a-dozen men, and was at once sent in irons to the guard-ship.

At nine o'clock one morning in January a jack was hoisted at the mizen-peak of the *SAN JOSEF* of one hundred and ten guns, then lying in Plymouth Sound, and the deep boom of a gun announced the assembling of a general court-martial. Their Lordships had issued their commission to the Rear-Admiral, third-in-command, as President. He arrived in his barge, followed by twelve post-captains, who had been summoned as members of the court, and their boats were crowded at the great three-decker's booms and gangway like carriages outside a theatre.

In the absence of the Judge-Advocate and his deputy a leading Plymouth lawyer was appointed to act in their stead. He knew the duties of the office well, for there

had been many recent courts-martial; and the *HERMIONE*, the *DANÆ*, and the *ALBANAISE* had furnished many precedents for the trial, and execution, of mutineers.

A naval court-martial must always be an impressive spectacle; but it could never have a more effective setting than the low-pitched, heavily-timbered cabins of the old line-of-battle ships. The President sat at the head of the long table, and six captains, in order of seniority, sat on either side. At the foot (the forward end) was the chair of the Judge-Advocate, and at his left stood the prisoner, his head within a few inches of the massive beams above him. The light from the skylight in the quarter-deck fell on the seated members of the court and on the paper-strewn table between them; the face of the man whose fate they were about to decide was in the falling shadow. At a small table within arms' length of him sat his counsel, or "next friend;" a lawyer who had been instructed to defend him by the widow who kept the Ship at Weymouth, the only friend who came to help Corsellis in his hour of need. The witnesses stood in a knot together at the right hand of the Judge-Advocate, and a little crowd of spectators, naval and civilian, stood about the doorways and along the forward bulkhead.

There was little hesitation or delay about the proceedings. The court being sworn and the prisoner brought in by the provost-marshal, the charges were read by the Judge-Advocate, — mutiny, murder, and piracy, having been taken on board a French privateer in arms against the subjects of the King. Formal evidence was put in of the mutiny on board the *PIGMY* and the murder of the officers, as reported by the cartel; and then one witness after

another took his place at the right hand of the Judge-Advocate, and gave his sworn testimony. Two or three swore to Corsellis's identity as one of the *PIGMY*'s crew; and to each of these a question, written by the prisoner's counsel and handed by the prisoner to the Judge-Advocate, was put as to the character borne by Corsellis; in each case the answer was most favourable. Men from the *KANGAROO* proved that he, together with another man mortally wounded, had been picked up from the wreckage of the *MALOUINE* privateer after an engagement in which several of the brig's crew had lost their lives. A watch was produced which had been found in the pocket of the wounded man, and was identified by a Plymouth watchmaker as the property of William Martin, late master of the *PIGMY*, for whom he had repaired it. That was the case for the Crown.

The prisoner's defence, drawn up by his counsel, was then read by the Judge-Advocate. It was the plain story of the actual facts, plainly told by the counsel, and set fairly before the court by the Judge-Advocate. That it was wild and improbable was no fault of theirs; but its effect upon the court was decidedly unfavourable to the prisoner. The President put a few questions.

"During the struggle on the *PIGMY*, prisoner, did you become aware that the man Collins was one of the mutineers?"

The prisoner hesitated, and turned hurriedly to his counsel.

"Your answer cannot harm him now," said the President. "Answer my question."

"I saw him among the mutineers."

"When he dragged you into the boat, was anything said?"

"I called him a mutineer, and told him I'd hang him if we got ashore."

There was a movement in the court. One or two of the members shifted in their chairs to get a better view of the prisoner's face.

"What then?"

"He told me he'd hang me if I gave evidence against him."

A sound like an indrawn breath passed round the cabin; the favourable impression of a moment had gone by.

"You sat quietly in the boat with him; you saw him rifle the master's pockets and throw him overboard, and you did nothing?"

"What could I do? He was armed and I wasn't. And,—he was my messmate, and he'd saved my life. I wish to God Almighty he'd let me drown!"

"Afterwards you entered with him on board the privateer?"

"No, sir, I never did. When the captain asked me, I told him I'd see him damned first."

"Were you kept in confinement after that?"

"No, sir."

"Do you mean to say that you were left at liberty, after your refusal to join, to run about the ship as you pleased?"

"I believe 'twas thought we'd join 'em later, sir. I meant to go to prison, or to run if we got the chance; as God is my judge, I did."

"Why did you make a false statement when you were picked up, and conceal your identity?"

"Because he,—my mate that's dead—asked me."

When the court was cleared for the members to deliberate upon their finding, some few were inclined to give credit to the prisoner's statement; but the Judge-Advocate, being asked how far the court was justified in attaching weight to a statement unsupported by any evidence, cited a charge delivered to a jury by Mr. Justice Buller four

years before, in a similar case, tried at the Old Bailey; when he told them "that if they admitted the excuse of the prisoner they would have all the French privateers manned by British subjects, and their commerce would then be in a miserable situation."

The Judge-Advocate then put the question to each member separately, beginning with the junior captain: "Are you of opinion that the charge against the prisoner is proved or not proved?" Two were for acquittal on the charges of mutiny and murder; the rest considered all the charges proved, and in accordance with this finding the court pronounced sentence of death.

The doors were opened and the prisoner brought in. The President announced the finding of the court, and informed the prisoner that the sentence would be sent to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for confirmation.

Upon a cold wet morning some weeks later, a gun was fired from the *SAN JOSEF* and the yellow flag, the fatal signal for an execution, was run up to the foretopgallant-masthead. The same flag was hoisted on the frigate where the execution was to take place, and the crews of all the ships in the Sound were mustered on deck to hear the Articles of War read, and to await in silence the dread example which was to be set before them. A lieutenant with an armed boat's crew was sent off from each of them, and they gathered around the gangways on either side of the frigate. One man from each boat was summoned on board to assist in the execution; and then the boats drew back and lay on their oars in the dreary drizzle to give passage to the boat from the *SAN JOSEF* which brought the provost-marshal, the chaplain, and the condemned man to the last ship he would ever go on board of.

They read his sentence to him on the quarter-deck, and asked him if he desired to make any statement.

"On'y this,—I'm a sailor, and I'll die as a sailor should; but more than that, I'll die innocent. The God I'm goin' before is my witness that I never was a mutineer nor yet a murderer. I've always tried to keep a straight course, but it seems as if there'd been something stronger than me,—a current like—setting me down to leeward all the while. I wish you all better luck than me, as have always done my duty. Some day or other the truth'll come out, and then perhaps you'll remember all this,— " he looked hurriedly round him—"and do me justice. That's all!"

He walked quietly forward with the provost-marshal, and the mixed crowd of seamen, mostly strangers to each other, tallied on to the fall. One dropped on the wet deck in a dead faint, but the rest hung on to the rope and waited with heads

hung-downward miserably. The fatal gun was fired and they stumbled blindly aft, thankful that their faces were turned away from their ugly work. So John Corsellis, who was guilty of no crime, but had always done his duty to the best of his ability, paid for his folly and ignorance at the current wages of sin. Wickedness and folly often stand in the dock side by side; and in this world at least, wickedness often gets off with the lighter sentence.

They never knew the truth. When the boatswain was exchanged three years afterwards, he came to Plymouth and heard the story. He could not get rid of a hazy impression that he had seen Corsellis by the lieutenant's side, helping with the boat. If that was so,—well, it was very hard on him. But he couldn't be sure; least said was soonest mended, and after all, it was the luck of a sailor.

W. J. FLETCHER.

ST. LUCIA, 1778.

BEFORE the opening of the fourth campaign of the War of American Independence in 1778, the entire aspect of the struggle was changed by France's open declaration of hostilities against England. So far the British had enjoyed undisputed supremacy at sea on the American coast, and had turned it to good account. The fleet had carried Howe's small army away from destruction in Boston in 1775; it had brought it back to the capture of New York and Rhode Island in 1776 and of Philadelphia in 1777; and, but for the imbecility of Lord George Germaine, it would have averted the disaster of Saratoga by transporting Burgoyne to New York. By the entry of the French navy on the scene, however, all this was changed. Doubtless there were many who would gladly have abandoned all operations against America and turned the whole strength of England against France; but this was forbidden by the aggressive attitude of the Americans themselves. It is customary to represent them as an innocent, down-trodden people, who were driven by ill-treatment to take up arms for their defence. Nothing could be further from the fact. The revolutionary party in Boston was from the first bent on aggression. The riots over the Stamp Act were violent beyond all proportion to the provocation: the invasion of Canada preceded any attempt to drive the British from Boston; and the despatch of seditious emissaries to the West Indies, and actual raids upon Bermuda and the Bahamas, furnish additional evidence that the revolu-

tionary leaders were inflated with offensive schemes of the most ambitious kind. The withdrawal of British troops from America would have brought about a fresh invasion of Canada, and a joint attack of Americans and French upon the West Indies. The British foiled the first by continuing offensive operations on the Continent. Their measures to protect the West Indies are the subject of the present article.

Both the British and the French possessions in the Caribbean Archipelago were and are divided into two groups, the eastward and the westward or, in the more familiar terms of the trade-wind, the windward and the leeward. Those of the windward chain, with which alone we are at present concerned, were at that time even more curiously divided between the two nations than at present. To windward of all lies Barbados, then as always English, in a most advantageous position, since being the nearest to Europe it was the first to receive troops and supplies from the old country, and could count upon a fair wind to distribute them among the other islands. It was beyond all others wealthy and prosperous, but having unfortunately no safe harbour, it could not be used as a naval base of operations. One hundred and fifty miles southwest of Barbados is Tobago, then the most southerly of our West Indian possessions; and from Tobago northward there run in succession the English islands of Grenada and St. Vincent, which have none of them any safe harbour of importance, and

were then so slightly settled and so thinly populated as to be of comparatively little value. Each one of them possessed a small garrison of three or four hundred men, sufficient to protect them against the raids of the native Caribs (who were as yet still numerous and inclined to mischief), but wholly inadequate to repel a French attack.

North of St. Vincent, however, the chain of the British possessions was broken first by the French island of St. Lucia, with its excellent harbour of Port Castries, which was well fortified. Next to St. Lucia lies another French island, Martinique, with the harbour then called Fort Royal, which also was strongly fortified and held by a considerable garrison, having been for years the headquarters of the French to windward. Thirty miles north of Martinique comes Dominica, a British island, with no safe harbour, and at that time little settled and weakly held; then comes Guadeloupe, another French island, with a fine and well fortified harbour; and to north of Guadeloupe lies the cluster of British islets known officially as the Leeward Islands, all of them rich and prosperous at that time, but with no good port except at Antigua, where St. John's constituted the one British naval station. The trend of these eastern islands being in a curve from south-west to north-west, they are subject among themselves to the inexorable law of the trade-wind; and hence Grenada, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia are still officially called the Windward, and Antigua with her sisters the Leeward Islands. For instance, though you might sail from Martinique to Dominica in a few hours, you could not beat back from Dominica to Martinique in less than three or four days against wind and current; similarly the passage from

Barbados to Martinique would occupy twenty-four hours, but the return voyage was bound to occupy a fortnight or three weeks at least, and might on occasion prove absolutely impossible. But the chief advantage lay on the side of the French, for, with the exception of Barbados, Martinique and St. Lucia are the most easterly of the whole chain, and they have good harbours whereas Barbados has none. The task for the British was to find a position to seal the fountain-head of French aggression at Martinique.

Hence it was that in the middle of 1778 the Commander-in-Chief in America received orders to ship about six thousand of his troops to Barbados for a secret expedition to the West Indies. A powerful French fleet under Count d'Estaing had been on the American coast the whole summer but had accomplished nothing, and finally had sailed on November 4th for Martinique, to spend a profitable winter in the West Indies. On the very same day Commodore Hotham sailed from New York, escorting the fifty-nine transports on which the British troops were embarked, and set his course likewise for the West Indies. As the two commanders had started together, so they arrived practically together at their destination. D'Estaing with twelve unencumbered ships reached Martinique on December 9th; twenty-four hours later Hotham brought the whole of his unwieldy charge into Carlisle Bay at Barbados, and found, as he expected, a squadron lying there at anchor.

Very beautiful the sight must have been as the huge fleet came sliding in over the clear, blue water, with the sails shining white under the tropical sun and the line of red coats round every ship's side. Very welcome too to the men must have been

the view of the low hills, with their robe of green sugar-cane and their crown of wind-mills, after a cold and stormy passage of thirty-six days: possibly more welcome still was the glimpse of rum-shops on the foreshore. But flying on one of the line-of-battle ships was the flag of Rear-Admiral Barrington, from whom came at once a stern order that not a man must go ashore, but that all must work their hardest to ship water and stores, and to make good defects. No doubt there was grumbling; no doubt there were longing glances at innocent-looking cocoa-nuts, containing something stronger than milk, which were visible among the vegetables in the negroes' bumboats. Still fresh meat and bananas were some compensation for the loss of the liquor, and it may be guessed that at least a tot of rum was served out to all at the end of a hard day's work. For within twenty-four hours all was ready: the sick had been landed and the needful stores embarked; and then, without a moment's delay, the anchors were weighed and the sails let fall, and fleet and transports vanished away to leeward before the trade-wind.

Early on the morning of December 13th every soldier on deck was straining his eyes at two little blue mounds which peeped over the horizon far to the south-west. Higher and higher they rose, like two tall sugar-loaves out of the sea, while the lower peaks of a tangled confusion of hills rose likewise on their northern side. The sugar-loaves were the Pitons of St. Lucia, the troops were told, marking the southern end of the island. Then another mass of blue mountains rose to the north-west, which could be no other than Martinique. The fleet now ran round the northern end of St. Lucia, altered its course from west to south and closed in with the

western coast, till all could see the beautiful chaos of lofty volcanic mountains in their heavy mantle of tropical forest. But the officers noticed that one or two of the lower hills were square-topped and had flags flying on them, while from three different headlands there came puffs of white smoke as the fleet passed by, and the round-shot flew skimming over the water, generally falling far short of the ships but twice striking one or two of them. A deep, narrow bay shrinking far into the heart of the hills, with a cluster of houses at its head, attracted every soldier's eye, for they were told that it was Port Castries; but the Admiral held on his course for two miles south of it, when the leading ship suddenly put her helm over, and at two o'clock dropped her anchor in an inlet called Grand Cul de Sac. The rest of the fleet followed, the troops eagerly preparing for disembarkation, and within a very short time the boats were filled with red-coats on their way to the shore.

By five o'clock one brigade of the troops under General Medows was landed complete with arms, accoutrements, and one day's provisions only, and at once began its march, the light companies of the whole force leading the way. The direction of the column was northward, and the only track was a path following the spur of a very steep hill through thick and impenetrable jungle; but the patient soldiers plodded along it in single file for two weary miles in the failing light, when a sputter of musketry in their front made the light infantry dash forward, just in time to see a small party of Frenchmen running for their lives. One of them was caught, but would give no information, except that, though taken, he personally was still unconquered, and that there were plenty of Frenchmen on the island to defend it. It

being now dark the troops bivouacked where they stood, and at daybreak found themselves at the foot of a much higher and steeper hill than that which they had passed, with a party of the enemy awaiting them in their fortifications at the summit. Five more battalions of the British force joined the advanced brigade shortly after daybreak, and the whole then continued their forward movement, with no further molestation than a few shot plunging down from the French cannon above them. The way still led through the same narrow track up an extremely steep ascent, where it would have been easy for a resolute force, however weak, to check them. But on reaching the top, breathless with the long climb in the tropical heat, they met with a flag of truce, and, after the firing of a few shots by some ignorant inhabitants, they received peaceable possession of all the fortifications, with the buildings, stores, and guns within them. The garrison of St. Lucia had evidently not yet arrived in the island; and the Morne Fortuné, for this hill was no other, was thus captured practically without resistance.

From the summit of the height the British looked down on the harbour of Castries Bay beneath them and on the few houses at its head, but saw no sign of cultivation, nothing but range upon range of mountains, even higher than the Morne Fortuné, all covered with jungle, and crowned by a bank of mist which presently broke in a deluge of tropical rain. Medows's brigade then descended the hill to the harbour, marched round the head of it, and without firing a shot took possession of a peninsula called the Vigie, which bounds it on the northern side. Thus the whole of the forts and batteries, mounting in all fifty-nine guns, which protected

Port Castries, fell with their ammunition and stores into the hands of the British; and a fortified harbour was gained, ready made, at the cost of a very few men killed and wounded. All that the army now desired was that the squadron would come in with the baggage, for neither officers nor men had anything except the clothes in which they stood. Towards evening the officers, looking northward towards Martinique, made out twenty-four sail at sea, and were lost in conjecture as to what they might be; but deciding that they must be provision-ships from Barbados, they mentally wished them a good passage and went grumbling to such rest as they could find.

On the following morning, December 15th, the strange fleet came close under the shore and was seen to be that of Count D'Estaing, consisting of twenty-four ships of war, or more than double the number of Barrington's squadron, with fifty or sixty smaller craft evidently full of troops. General Grant in hot haste sent an officer to warn the Admiral in Cul de Sac Bay; but when the messenger arrived he found the whole of the transports packed neatly within the inlet, and the men-of-war anchored in perfect order across the entrance. Barrington had seen the enemy's fleet on the previous evening, and having spent the night in making his dispositions, had retired to rest in a hammock among his ship's company. The aide-de-camp roused him and delivered his message by the hammock's side. "Young man," said the Admiral, drowsily, "I cannot write to the General at present; but tell him that I hope he is as much at ease on shore as I am on board." And with that he laid his head on the pillow and went to sleep again.

In due time the French fleet came up to the entrance of the bay and

very solemnly filed twice past the British squadron keeping up a heavy cannonade at long range, which did no damage whatever beyond the wounding of three men. Then, deciding that he had better leave Barrington alone, D'Estaing beat back to Anse de Choc, a bay immediately to the north of the Vigie peninsula, where his troops were disembarked on the same evening. On the two following days his small craft returned to Martinique to fetch more men, while the French men-of-war tried to make their way into Castries harbour, and to cut off the supply of provisions from the imprisoned fleet in the Cul-de-Sac. But the French engineers had done their work so well when they fortified Port Castries that no ship could approach within effective range of the Vigie; and though boats were easily prevented from bringing provisions from the squadron by day, they passed as easily through the French cruisers by night.

Still the situation of the British was an anxious one, for the defeat of the army would mean that Barrington's squadron would be driven by French guns ashore into the jaws of D'Estaing's fleet, while the defeat of the squadron would deprive the army of its supplies. Moreover the nature of the case had compelled Grant to divide his small force. Four battalions, under Sir Henry Calder, had been left to guard the heights around Cul de Sac Bay to prevent attack upon the transports from the land, and to maintain communication with Morne Fortuné. Five more battalions held Morne Fortuné itself to secure the south shore of Port Castries, while the remaining three under Medows held the peninsula of Vigie. This peninsula presented a strong defensive position, since the approach to it lay across an isthmus little more

than two hundred yards wide at its narrowest point; and Medows had accordingly drawn up the bulk of his force in rear of this neck, with a single advanced post beyond it on the mainland.

The French meanwhile had taken up a position at right angles to Medows's line and not more than two miles distant from it, pushing forwards their picquets until the French sentries could, — and in one case actually did—exchange pinches of snuff with the British. The question was, what were D'Estaing's intentions? What he would have liked, no doubt, would have been for Medows to have withdrawn the whole of his troops in rear of the neck, when he could have left a sufficient force to hold him in check, and marched round the head of the harbour with the remainder to attack Morne Fortuné; but Medows had been careful, as we have seen, to preserve egress from the peninsula by means of an advanced post. There remained, therefore, one of two alternatives,—to leave a force to contain that of Medows, and to move the bulk of the French troops to Cul de Sac Bay, so as to overwhelm Calder, or to make an end of Medows, if possible, at a single stroke. A clue to D'Estaing's designs was obtained on the evening of the 17th, when a French deserter came into Vigie with the news that the French were so posted as to isolate the brigade on the peninsula completely, and that they intended to attack it forthwith with twelve thousand men. Medows's officers shrugged their shoulders at a mere deserter's story, but, reflecting on the tried excellence and long experience of their own men, rather hoped that it might be true.

Indeed the brigade occupying Vigie, though mustering but thirteen hundred men, was of no ordinary quality.

It consisted of the 5th, now known as the Northumberland Fusiliers, and the grenadier companies and light companies of the 4th, 15th, 27th, 28th, 35th, 40th, 46th, and 55th, massed into a grenadier battalion and a light infantry battalion as was the fashion of the day. The flank-companies, as they were called, were the finest men of their regiments, and the regiments in themselves were composed of no common soldiers. Most of them had been engaged at Bunker's Hill, and every one of them in the victorious actions of Brooklyn, Fort Washington, and Brandywine. The commander of this detachment, too, Colonel Medows, had served in Germany under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, and had fought through most of the American war; while he was by nature not only a good and daring soldier, but a man of so buoyant a temper and so cheerful a wit that no one could feel discouraged in his presence. His epigrams enlivened more than one storming-party afterwards in India, and on one occasion he actually averted a panic by a timely jest.

Throughout the night of the 17th the rain fell heavily, continuing until seven o'clock in the morning, when it was observed that the French were nearer to the British advanced posts than usual, and in greater numbers. The main position of the British, in rear of the neck of the peninsula, lay on the slope of a low rugged hill, the foot of which was covered with scrub. Outside the neck, the advanced post of five companies of light infantry was stationed upon two low hills; and this was the point which appeared to be threatened by the enemy. General Medows and two of his battalion-commanders went down to it to see what might be going forward; when to their horror the officers in the rear of the neck saw two strong French

battalions emerge suddenly from a belt of low brushwood along the beach, and move up against the front and flank of the light infantry as if to cut them off. It was an awkward moment, for the General seemed to be in danger of being cut off also, and, in the absence of orders, many doubted whether the main body ought not to advance in order to rescue their comrades. But presently Medows came back perfectly cool and composed. "The light infantry will take care of themselves," he said; "as for you, stand fast."

The light infantry did take care of themselves, for they had learned some useful lessons in America. Advancing in skirmishing order, and keeping themselves always under cover, they maintained at close range a most destructive fire upon the heavy French columns. If the French attempted to extend, they threatened a charge with the bayonet; when the French closed up, they were themselves already extended and pouring in a galling fire; when the French advanced with solidity and determination, they retired as if beaten and disappeared, but only to renew their fire, invisible themselves, from every direction. But when at last one of the French battalions gave way, they followed them and completed the rout with the bayonet. Meanwhile the rest of the French army came up slowly in solid columns to the attack of the main position, unobserved by the light infantry who were returning to the defence of their advanced post. "Come back, come back," yelled their comrades and the grenadiers from behind the neck; but the light companies would not hear, until regaining the slope they saw their danger, and dashed into the scrub to join the main body. They made their escape in safety, thanks in part to the den-

sity of the brushwood, but thanks above all to Captain Downing, Lieutenant Waring, and Privates Rose, Duffy, and Hargrove of the 55th, who stood alone and unaided in a narrow path to cover their retreat. These five gallant fellows parried the bayonet-thrusts for long until Waring was run through the body, and Downing was on the point of sharing his fate, when a French officer stepped forward and touched his sword with a significant gesture. There was no resisting so chivalrous an appeal, and Downing with his three companions surrendered.

The French now developed their attack upon the main position, filling the scrub near the foot of the hill with their light troops, while their battalions in massive columns continued their slow and steady advance. The British field-guns (four three-pounders) now opened fire, quickly silencing the still lighter pieces of the French; and the grenadiers, who were fast dropping under the bullets of the enemy's sharp-shooters, likewise began their fire, in perfect order and without confusion, husbanding every cartridge, for they had but thirty rounds a man. Meanwhile the French columns never fired a shot, though whole ranks of them were swept away by the British cannon. They endured the punishment with all the bravery of their nation, but made no progress, though they kept changing direction to right and left as if looking for the easiest way to ascend the hill. One of them broke twice and was twice rallied, until at last they all came to a dead halt, still within range of the British, and there like helpless images they stood or fell.

Meanwhile the British on their side were falling fast, and ammunition began to fail. The French, too, brought forward fresh battalions as if determined to carry the position;

and Medows gave the order to cease fire until the enemy came within very close range, when the troops should retire under the smoke of their volleys to the summit of the hill, form line, and charge with the bayonet. The British musketry fell silent accordingly, and the men, reserving five rounds a piece, sat down and endured the enemy's fire; but still the French did not advance. Fresh ammunition from the magazine on Morne Fortuné was presently brought across the harbour in a boat, and on the reopening of the British fire the French retired in confusion. The fight had lasted for three hours, from eight until eleven o'clock in the morning.

The casualties of the British did not exceed one hundred and seventy-one, of whom thirteen only were killed; the grenadiers losing close upon ninety officers and men and the light infantry over sixty. Medows himself was wounded early in the day, but never left the field for a moment; and when the action was over he visited every wounded officer and man before he would receive the surgeon's attention himself. His epigrammatic soul had been greatly cheered by an answer returned to him by a young subaltern, Lieutenant Gomm of the 46th, who in the heat of the action was wounded in the eye. "I hope that you have not lost your eye, sir," said the General. "I believe I have, sir," replied Gomm, "but with the other I shall see you victorious this day." Meanwhile the unwounded officers made their way to the neck where the French columns had stood, and came upon a scene which turned them sick. The white-coats, hideously stained, lay thick upon the ground, over four hundred men being killed outright, and twelve hundred grievously wounded. Very soon every British soldier who could be spared was ministering to the poor fellows,

and some of the officers were for burying the dead; but here Meadows interposed, saying that the French must do that for themselves. So a flag of truce was sent to Count D'Estaing accompanied by a bugle-horn, which having been at first fired upon (since the French were not aware that the bugle had already begun to replace the drum) was courteously received and dismissed. Four hundred Frenchmen came down to inter their dead, but after six hours had not finished their work, which our men were fain to complete for themselves.

Even so, however, D'Estaing did not wholly abandon the hope of expelling the British. On the day following the action he sent thirty transports full of troops to the south of Cul de Sac, where they landed with the intention of seizing some heights that overlooked the bay, erecting mortar-batteries on them and bombarding the transports that were crowded together in the inlet. But Sir Henry Calder speedily detached some of the 35th and 40th to seize the heights, and the French, finding themselves forestalled, would not hazard another attack. The attempt was therefore abandoned, and after a week more of sullen delay D'Estaing, on December 28th, returned with his ships and the remains of his army to Martinique. The few French posts that still remained then hauled down their flags; and on January 6th Admiral Byron, having been delayed by storms,—the usual luck of Foul-weather Jack, as the men called him—arrived with his fleet, securing to the British the possession of St. Lucia.

Thus closed an extremely remarkable little campaign, one of the few of which it may truly be said that the whole issue turned upon twenty-four hours of time. Had Barrington

delayed for one day longer at Barbados, his squadron and transports must have fallen a prey to D'Estaing's far superior fleet. Even then, had Grant waited till next dawn instead of landing his troops and beginning his march in the dusk of the evening, the French militia with their small nucleus of regular troops might have held Morne Fortuné until D'Estaing came to their relief. The island once occupied and D'Estaing fairly on the spot, it remained for the British commanders by land and sea to play their parts to perfection, for the defeat of either meant disaster to both. Yet so admirable were the dispositions not only of Barrington and Grant, but of Grant's brigadiers, Calder and Meadows, that D'Estaing was driven back with shame and with heavy loss to Martinique.

The action on the Vigie is also notable in itself, being the first example of the employment of the new British tactics, learned in America, against the old system favoured in Europe. The French were puzzled beyond measure by the work of the British light infantry. They had *chasseurs* of their own, but these were never supposed to make any serious resistance, whereas five companies of British *chasseurs* had made havoc of two battalions which outnumbered them by four to one, not only by defence but by counter-attack. Beyond all question Meadows relied not a little on the moral effect of these new tactics upon troops trained in an older school, for the maintenance of these five companies in their isolated position was obviously an extremely hazardous step. Yet he took that step deliberately, and he was fully justified by success. Every officer and man of his force knew what to do, and did it; whereas the French, though they stood bravely enough, were absolutely at a loss. In fact

the behaviour of Meadows's battalions was exactly that of the famous Light Division in its palmyest days; thus confirming the forgotten fact that Moore's reforms in tactics were built on the experience of America.

For the rest, St. Lucia remained in British hands until the close of the war, with the most important results. Grant, an excellent officer with the greatest admiration for the Navy, perceived its value at once. "We are here, in a way looking into Fort Royal," he wrote,—at the very gate, in other words, of the chief French naval station to windward—and he resolved that such a station should not easily be lost. Lord George Germaine who, for the sins of England, was acting at this time as her Minister of War, wished to disperse the garrison over the neighbouring British islands; but Grant absolutely refused to do so. Three of the islands were indeed taken by the French, but Grant declined to accept the blame for these mishaps, retorting upon this insolent Secretary of State that it was his lordship's own fault if islands were captured, since this could never have happened unless the British had been of inferior strength at sea. The mortality among the troops in St. Lucia was indeed terrible, until in 1780 a hurricane, by laying the whole of the forest low, improved the climate amazingly. But healthy or unhealthy the island was securely held, though the French made more than one attempt to retake it; and in 1782 its value was proved to the full.

The next inlet to the north of Anse du Choc is known as Gros Islet Bay, deriving its name from a rocky islet, called by the British Pigeon Island. It is a desolate,

barren hillock, strewn with the bones of whales and honeycombed by disused tanks and the foundations of ruined store-houses and magazines. Once it was garrisoned, and still it is an historic spot. In this bay for many weeks in the spring of 1782 lay Admiral Rodney's fleet, while a chain of frigates connected him by signal with the ships that watched the French fleet some fifty miles to northward in its safe harbour at Martinique; and on this Pigeon Island, it is said, the great admiral used to take his stand, day after day, with his glass under his arm, watching for the signal that the French would sail,—“in a way looking into Fort Royal,” as Grant said. On April 8th the long-awaited signal fluttered down the line of frigates, and the fleet weighed anchor, to win, on the 12th, the Battle of the Saints and thereby to assure the confederated enemies of England, whether foreign or rebel, that she had still the power to make them tremble.

St. Lucia was restored to the French by the peace of 1783, and reconquered after a far more arduous struggle by Abercromby and Moore in 1795, to pass finally into our possession by the Peace of Paris in 1814. It is now what it was designed to be in 1778, our principal naval station to windward; and it may be therefore that the old fortifications on Morne Fortuné have within recent years been swept away. But Pigeon Island remains, and probably there are few admirals on the West Indian Station who do not pay it a visit, in order (to use the words of one whom I was myself privileged to accompany) “to stand where old Rodney stood before he went out to lick the French.”

J. W. FORTESCUE.

PRIMROSE-DAY.

PRIMROSE DAY, and all the streets
 With a borrowed gold are gay,
 Honeyed are with borrowed sweets.
 Everywhere the vision meets
 Hints and glints of country places ;
 Hollows full of crumpling fern,
 Whispers of a hurrying burn,
 And a skylark far above
 Chanting Godwards laud and love ;
 Fields of daisies, bluebell-sheets,—
 All these lovelinesses rise
 Clear before the glamoured eyes
 Looking in these primrose faces.

Wonderful it is to see
 Their delicious wizardry :
 How with petals soft and cold
 They have wrought on heart and brain,
 Till the clock turns back again,
 And we see with eyes washed clear
 From the film of day and year.
 We are young that had grown old
 Chasing Hope and finding Fear :
 We are young, and we believe
 Both in Eden and in Eve :
 Fairyland to us is free
 By the rainbow's golden key.
 While we wear these yellow flowers
 Youth and Memory are ours ;
 Though to-morrow we shall be
 Left alone with Memory.

ART AND LIFE.

WHAT about Bohemia? Is it perhaps as mythical as Shakespeare's fabled country by the sea, or as obsolete as the nationality of the people from whom it takes its name? What is it, where is it, and above all why is it? Is there any occasion or excuse for it? Is it a vital part of the artistic life or only an excrescence on it, the cradle or the grave of genius? In short, what is the bearing of a man's life upon his work, and how far is it necessary or to be desired, either in the interests of the man or of his work, that he should adopt a life in some degree peculiar to his calling? These are the questions it is here proposed to discuss, and from a point of view midway between the extremes of prejudice, from a standpoint, that is to say, as remote from the orthodoxy which is shocked at the Bohemianism that does not wear a tall silk hat in town as from the unorthodoxy that would think it Philistine to neglect any opportunity of outraging public opinion.

There is a fantastic idea of the artistic life which is no doubt mythical; but even for that there was a foundation: the very myth which has grown about it really goes to prove the existence of Bohemia. Nor is it by any means extinct, though its shores shift so with the tide of fashion that it is impossible to fix them with precision.

Bohemianism is as old as vagrancy; Homer has been claimed as a Bohemian; but the term in its modern sense is relatively modern. Balzac may be said to have given it currency by the publication of *UN PRINCE DE*

BOHÈME in 1840; and soon after that Henri Murger threw the country open, so to speak, in the famous *SCENES DE LA VIE DE BOHÈME*. These godfathers of the vague domain were of opinion that Bohemia existed only, and could only exist, in Paris: one of them located it definitely in the Boulevard des Italiens; but they both lived (like many another Parisian) in a world which did not extend far beyond the banks of the Seine. The truth is that, though there may be something racial in the tendency towards it, it stands for no nation but for a phase of life. The Bohemia of Balzac and Murger is naturally not that of Thackeray and Robertson, but, wherever there is society, upon its outskirts lies Bohemia. To the born Bohemian all the world is Bohemia, and Bohemia all the world. As one of its poets has sung:

Though the latitude's rather uncertain,
The longitude equally vague,
That person I pity who knows not the
city,
The beautiful city of Prague.

And what is this Bohemian existence? It differs, of course, in different localities, and in the same locality it changes from generation to generation; but it follows always a direction somewhat apart from the current of accepted conventions. It arises perhaps out of a certain shyness of society,—*sauvage* is the French epithet—which, whether or not characteristic of the Red Indian, is a distinguishing instinct of certain of us who find it necessary to full artistic activity to live a life some-

what apart. The Savage of the twentieth century lives and orders his life quite otherwise than the men who founded, for example, the Savage Club. In dress and bearing he is irreproachable, he is far from affecting the dishevelled, he has long since abandoned the Owls' Nest, he has been known to entertain Royalty; he may be himself a Lord Chief Justice; but at heart he is, or was (or else he is an impostor) a rebel against convention, vowed to go his own way, lead his own life, the life of freedom necessary to his nature and to the exercise of his calling.

The name of Bohemian calls to mind the wandering gipsy life; and there is a race of artists temperamentally of the tribe of the Zingari, passionate lovers of nature, vagabond of mind if not of body, with a dash perhaps of the mountebank or itinerant showman in them, though it is only with words and colours that they juggle; some there are who never get beyond their *Wander-Jahr*, never settle down to steady work,—the strolling players at art, they might be called—but Bohemians are not, as the name might be taken to imply, nomadic; they live even too narrowly within the confines of the artistic milieu. That is what they seek, that is the vindication of their fraternity. Their revolt against Philistia may be of the mildest. The frame of mind which in the Middle Ages led bookish men to seek shelter in the cloister, where, amid surroundings comparatively propitious and society not uncongenial, it was possible to pursue in peace their learned or artistic vocation, brings them nowadays sooner or later to Bohemia,—for a time at least, until perhaps the path of matrimony lures them away. The attitude of the Bohemian may be something short of active rebellion against convention; strictly speaking it need not amount

to more than non-conformity,—about the last word by which he would himself describe it.

Convention is the measure of common convenience; and great is the convenience of conformity. We are tempted, if only to avoid the wear and tear of existence, tamely to agree in word and deed with whatever may be currently accepted. But what if, in the case of the artistic temperament, the endeavour to conform should result only in continual friction? It is in order to avoid daily and hourly friction that the artist once for all declines to conform. Convenience in his case consists in conforming to a rule of life framed with a view to artistic needs, not social considerations.

"Great men," said Balzac, "belong to their works." The artist may be too ready to take himself for a great man, but, great or small, he belongs to his work. The way an artist lives is his affair. The hours he works, what time he goes to bed or gets up in the morning, the fashion of his clothes, the society he frequents, the amusements of his idle hours, concern himself alone; and him they concern more deeply than is always understood. He has, for one thing, to keep clear of much which, natural as it may be to others, would be to him fruitless expenditure. The habits of Philistia, based as they are upon the ways and wants of the well-to-do, may or may not be adapted to the needs of business and professional men; they do not in the least meet those of the artist. We hear of high prices given for works of art (especially when once the artist is safely dead and does not benefit thereby), but artists find it as a rule difficult enough to pay their way, and they are acting only in self-defence when they refuse to spend upon what is not merely unnecessary, but would

be no luxury to them if they had it, the hard-earned money they can so much better lay out in things which, luxuries though they might be to others, are necessities to them; in books, for example, travel, rest, recreation, and all manner of what may seem extravagance but is really not merely helpful but essential to their craft. It is only on condition of a sort of selfishness,—at all events it is sure to be called selfishness—that a man whose work is individual does his best. And in repudiating those conventions of society which hinder him in doing it he is acting in the general interest no less than in his own. In his case duty to society consists in doing good work, not in conforming to its ways,—even were that possible, which to him it may not be. His endeavour to do as others do seldom results in anything worth doing.

Our work is only partly ours. In part it is the result of circumstances, and very especially of our surroundings. We must take art as it is, with all the sensibility and super-sensitiveness of the artist. It is quite certain that talents which in the sunshine of sympathy would blossom freely are nipped long before appreciation falls to zero; and it is in pursuit of the equable temperature conducive to productiveness in him, that the artist gravitates towards Bohemia, establishes perchance his own Bohemia, gathering to him others of his kind. For want of some such haven the village poet is driven to seek the half-congenial shelter of the ale-house. It is only by rare exception that a man like Anthony Trollope can ply his craft with the regularity of a man of business, can lead the life of everybody and do his own work at the same time; and the phenomenon of an author putting his art into words at the rate of so

many an hour for so many hours every day, is probably to be accounted for by the rather prosaic character of his particular art. Mr. Andrew Lang once likened himself (as compared with the wilder singing-bird) to “a punctual domesticated barndoor-fowl laying its daily ‘article’ for the breakfast-table of the citizen”—that same *bourgeois*, by the way, whom the artist affects so to despise; but even the tame hen resents being cooped up.

It was Hamerton, I think, who said that an artist wants to wake up in the morning with the feeling that the day before him is all his, that he may give it to his work, and not be called off by social or other claims conflicting with it. It is because he finds it impossible to reconcile the ordinary way of life with devotion to his art, that he rebels against it. His intuition that the life of everyone is not the life for him argues no vice or weakness in him. That is very clearly seen in the case of Wordsworth, whose “plain living and high thinking” may be cited as a noble form of Bohemianism, an artist’s protest against the rich living and low thinking of Philistia, a flat refusal to fall in with ways of life which meant nothing to him, as compared with his life’s work. Thoreau again, seeking in the woods of Walden the atmosphere in which he could best work, stands for a gipsy-like but still gentle Bohemian, more at home in the solitude of Nature than in the society of men. The more typical form of Bohemian is illustrated in Walt Whitman, aggressively rebellious, so fearful indeed of being influenced by custom and convention as to make something of a parade of going counter to them. A rebel is obliged sometimes in self-defence to attack, to carry war into the country of an enemy who will not

leave him in peace. It is not mere bravado which makes a man proclaim his creed. Call him by a name to which some odium is attached, and, if he cannot shake it off, he will glory in it, just to show he is not ashamed of himself. For all that, too loud a boast of independence is not the surest proof of strong personality; ideas are none the less new or true for being expressed with due regard to the feelings and prejudices of others. An artist has not only to attract an audience but to keep it, and at times even to convert it.

A certain surliness in the attitude of an artist towards society may be accounted for by its seeming to hold out to him the promise of position or wealth, a bait which his artistic conscience warns him not to swallow. He has been known, of course, before now to take himself too seriously, and society may well disregard pretensions not warranted by work done, but it owes some attention to the protest of a man like Michel Angelo. "The world," he said, "forgets that the really zealous artist is in duty bound to abstain from the idle trivialities and current compliments of society, not because he is high and mighty or disdainful, but because his art imperatively claims his energy, all of it. If he had leisure equal to the rest of the world, the rest of the world might expect him to observe its rules of etiquette or ceremony. As it is they seek his society for their own honour and glory, and they must put up with his crotchets." That may be savage, but there is no denying the truth of it.

The artist, then, goes his own way, contrary as it may be to the neatly ordered paths of Philistia, no matter who may resent it. Resentment is partly owing to misunderstanding. The steady-going citizen is shocked by the artist's irregularity, the fitfulness

of his industry, not realising (how should he realise?) that this is not in him the vice it would be in a banker or his clerk. Pictures are not painted, nor statues modelled, nor poems written, with the regularity with which a man of business casts up accounts or answers letters. An artist's best work is done, not at fixed intervals, but when the fit is on him; and, short of making his moods an excuse for shirking work, he is not only justified in following them, but bound in economic prudence to do so. The artist may be a bit of an idler, but he is not always so idle as more regular workers may think. He works, when the fit is on him, at a pressure greatly beyond that of regular routine. There follow periods of exhaustion when it is his best wisdom to desist from work.

*Hast in der bösen Stund geruht,
Ist dir die gute doppelt gut.¹*

So wrote Goethe, and he was no idler. And then, remember, the artist whose heart is in what he is doing never gets quite free from it, is never so idle as the man whose work is a task from which it is a holiday to escape. An artist obeys and must obey his impulse, happy if it should not carry him too far. The peculiar temperament which is one of the conditions, if not the one condition, on which he holds his creative faculty, is not an unqualified blessing. Often it leads him astray. It is largely responsible for his irresponsibility, for the curious dulness of his common-sense, for his characteristic unfitness for the business of life. And his way of living, the way necessary it may be to his development on the artistic side, does nothing to correct the warp on the other, does not discourage

¹ Rest always in the evil hour;
So shall you work with double power.

waywardness, nor develop habits of caution, method, punctuality, and so forth, which (though he can afford to do without the to him intolerable routine so necessary to the conduct of more matter-of-fact affairs) are in some sort indispensable to great achievement in art.

The badge of all our tribe is wilfulness; but some at least of our apparent unreasonableness is, in strict truth, a most rational protest against the exorbitant demands commonly made upon conformity. That a man is proof against distractions which, while affording him no satisfaction, would yet hinder him in his work, that he denies himself what he does not in the least value in order to make sure of what he treasures, that he lives simply so as to be able to work sincerely,—is surely neither wayward nor wilful but the perfection of sweet reasonableness.

Plainly, then, the artist's life is not a myth, and the necessity for it is not extinct; and in so far as man, and least of all the artist, is (with the exception of here and there an anchorite) not a solitary animal, the aggregation of artists into communities in which they may rely upon the sympathy, the criticism, the incentive of fellow-workers,—Bohemia, in short,—is not merely justified; it is inevitable.

We pride ourselves upon our individuality, but absolutely independent we are not. The least sympathetic of us reflect the colour of our surroundings: here and there a man like Charles Kingsley seems to owe almost everything to his environment at the critical moment of his life; but it tells upon us all. Polite society makes the artist something of a man of fashion, just as the companionship of fellow artists kindles and strengthens in him the spirit which produces.

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The artist, then, is fully justified in leading the life which suits him. Adherence to custom being in the main a matter of convenience, it is no credit to a man that it suits his purpose to conform, no discredit that it does not. He needs no excuse for a very wide departure from the conventions others may have accepted. The misfortune is that in the atmosphere of Bohemia the foibles of the artist have full play, equally with his faculties, and thrive, as it proves, so abnormally, that the plea of the artistic life is made to cover a multitude of sins,—some of them venial, some not.

The final verdict upon Bohemianism must depend very much upon what is understood by it. We must distinguish between its phases. In one of them it has made itself sufficiently ridiculous. Young art is prone to offer up incense at the shrine of its own genius, and the fumes get into its silly head. It is not so much Bohemianism as youthful vanity which makes one budding poet vie with another as to which shall sport the most outrageous headgear, and, if need be, refer the matter to the solemn arbitration of a third genius. But the atmosphere has something to do with inflaming such youthful vanity. It has something to do with the state of mind in which a young gentleman can dye his hair crimson and, in a yellow waistcoat, knee-breeches, and a Scotch cap, disport himself in the Luxembourg Gardens; and makes possible the otherwise impossible point of view of his friends of the Chat Noir who were not only indignant at his getting locked up but astonished.

To the childish vanity of dressing-up has succeeded the determination not, if possible, to be taken for an artist; of which two forms of affectation (vain-glorious assertion of one's calling, and denying it) the more

ridiculous is the less insincere. In either case it is self-consciousness which is to blame, a vanity which will not allow a man to go about his business without always thinking what sort of a figure he cuts. Art outgrows one affectation after another, but not the vanity which gives rise to them successively. A lasting conceit is that which affects to be apart, strange, unnatural, exotic, none too moral, and prides itself upon a foolish artificiality. The pose of youthful genius has been very happily hit off by the distinguished critic, Jules Lemaitre.

To-day certain young literary men form a fresh variety of the human race; they take themselves more seriously than priests, philosophers, or politicians. At about the age of twenty the malady gets hold of them. They begin by believing with the narrowest and most fanatical faith that literature is the noblest of human callings, the only one possible to them (all others being below their notice) and that it is really *they* who invented literature. Then they make cliques of three or two or even one. They seek painfully the most outrageous forms of expression. They are more *naturaliste* than Zola, more impressionist than the de Goncourts, more grotesquely mystic than Poe or Beaudelaire. They invent the "art of the decadence," and what not. The comparatively modest among them think they have discovered psychology, and talk of nothing else. Formerly at the age of twenty we knew how to admire, we had some respect for our masters, we had a naïve affection for them,—Lamartine, Hugo, Musset and the rest—even Augier and Dumas inspired us with some consideration. But the arrogance of the new elite is unbounded. The youngsters take dislikes as arbitrary as their fancies, and their dislikes are as numerous as their admirations are rare. They hate and despise whatever is not like themselves. Knowing nothing they have a stupid and stubborn contempt for the sublimest genius or the most marvellous talent so soon as it is recognised. What with their intolerance and egotism, it is as difficult to talk to them as to a Dervish or a Thug. They are neither Christians nor citizens,

nor friends, nor perhaps so much as men—they are literary—each with his peculiar creed, in which he perhaps alone believes, which he alone understands, if he does understand it.

M. Lemaitre is speaking only of the literary exclusive, but his words have a general application to other artists, and not of his country alone. The French are by race less reticent than we, though we too are fast learning to exhibit ourselves without the disguise of costume. We should not have far to look for English parallels to Beaudelaire ransacking the dictionary for strange words with which to flavour his style, or to Théophile Gautier professing, in his rage for form, to prefer the picturesque atrocities of the worst of Roman Emperors to the clean life of the best of French citizens, out of which there was no artistic capital to be made. It is surely the *virus* of Parisian perversity working upon a smart English writer which makes him try and startle us by pointing, paradoxically, to M. Emile Zola as a "striking instance of the insanity of common-sense." The insincerity of the author of such topsy-turvydom is obvious; his one thought is plainly "to make the Philistine sit up" as he would say,—a common foible of the Bohemian, but for the most part a mere waste of fireworks. It is a distinguishing feature of the Philistine that he takes no notice of the class whose fond ambition it is to astound him, even if he is so much as aware of its existence. He neither sits up nor jumps out of his skin, but goes quietly about his business, as though the startling picture had not been painted, the shocking story not told,—and for the simple reason that it never comes to his knowledge. It is only human to take a rather perverse delight in shocking the straight-laced, more especially if we can flatter

ourselves that the unorthodox thing wants to be said or ought to be done; but the justification of unorthodoxy, and especially of protesting it aloud, is absolute sincerity, and much of the more wilfully original art of our day falls lamentably short of that. "What does it all mean?" said one city man to another,—they were standing before a very extreme picture at a London exhibition. "Mean?" said the other. "Why, it means you don't know anything about it, *but I do.*"

A serious set-off against the impulse and encouragement of sympathetic and appreciative society are the pretensions awakened by the over-appreciation of critics whose horizon does not extend beyond the confines of Bohemia. The thorough-paced Bohemian will go so far as to pride himself upon his failure; it argues him too good to be appreciated. If by chance another should achieve distinction (this argument never applies to oneself), if the Philistine should, instead of opening his eyes in wonder, open his purse and buy the work of a Bohemian, why, then it can't be as good as the thorough-goer thought; the author is in fact suspect, perhaps after all a Philistine in disguise.

The contemptuous assumption that the prosperity of an artist is the ruin of his art is less inexcusable. There is a quality of undeniable genius which appears quickly to parch in the atmosphere of social success. It is a fact (though envy may quicken the perception of it) that there is something goes to success in art which is not art, which may be developed at the expense of art, and in the end extinguish it. When a man is coining money he is probably not doing all he might have done. Bohemian contempt for success is not all assumed. It was quite fair banter, and not jealousy on the part of

Coppée's Donadieu, when he complained laughingly of his old friend, that he dared not blow his nose till sundown, because to drop his palette and take out his pocket-handkerchief was equivalent to the loss of a louis,—his last cold in the head cost him three thousand francs.

Success, as it is called, does not sit lightly upon the artist. It may prove a veritable old man of the sea upon his shoulders. His real success, of course, is in finding full expression of what he had to say, his true pride is in his work, and Bohemia fosters in him that proper pride, together with some pride of which the propriety is less obvious. It encourages him not merely to value art at its full worth but himself, as its exponent, at something more. Unfortunately for him, the feeling for art does not in the least imply a corresponding faculty. There are many more called than will ever be chosen, and some, who make sure of their vocation, hear only the voice of their own desire to be artists. Bohemia is haunted by these victims of an illusion which grows with each fresh disappointment only more stubborn, these dreamers of dreams never by any chance to come true. There, too, are other "ghosts" and "devils," hacks, and unknown artists who never will be known—who have nothing to expect from Fortune, for she does not so much as know their address, and they are careful not to give it, resigning thus their right to complain. There is nothing for the irreconcilables who are prepared to make no concession but to fight it out, and, when worsted, to accept defeat. Heroic submission is the only justification of what is else a pretence or a pose.

It is not proper pride but vanity which bids a man expect the world (in answer to his outspoken contempt

for it) to come and thrust a pedestal under his unwilling feet. Proper pride would urge him to earn his livelihood at no matter what honest trade, so he might be free in his uninspired moments to work according to his inspiration. Such moments are not so many that they would greatly interfere with the year's work. Genius itself is most of the time not fit for much more than plain journey-work.

Genius or journeyman, a worker must be the best judge of the way of living which suits his work. Who else can know the circumstances of his particular case? Let him live accordingly; and, though his manner of life seem to us eccentric or unorthodox, it is justified, as the expression of individual liberty, the assertion of a right to go one's own way. It is the pose of unorthodoxy which is so childish, a defect of that quality of youthfulness which is part of the artistic nature. That eternal youthfulness of the artist makes him the rebel that he is against the conventions of society. But rebellion works itself out. Reiterated protest becomes at last a trick of speech, repeated action falls into attitude, nonconformity becomes a pose, and, cruel irony! Bohemianism itself crystallises at last into neither more nor less than a new convention.

There is one theory of the artistic life which, sanely speaking, is not tenable,—the theory of the artist's immunity from the duties of manhood and good citizenship. Irresponsible he is no doubt, in the sense that he does not recognise his responsibilities; but that does not absolve him from them. The prevalence of this incurable irresponsibility among artists seems almost to argue some insanity of the artistic nature or some depravity in the artistic life. How else are we to account for the strange

perversion of the moral sense which makes it easier for a Burns to borrow than to accept money for the "efforts of his muse," and leads his artistic eulogist to find this "noble with the nobility of the Viking"? The Viking, no doubt, was unhampered by any very rigid ideas as to property or the means of acquiring it; but why noble? Another typical instance of perverted pride is that of a certain needy (one cannot say struggling) artist, to whom Canova sent the price of a study; his first thought was to send it back; but he eventually swallowed his resentment and stood treat at the inn till the money was all spent.

The boast of irresponsibility, on the part of men, some of whom at least were not without great gifts, has almost persuaded us to mistake it for a sign of genius. And they have a charming way with them sometimes. Who does not prefer "Dick Steele with all his faults to Addison with all his essays"? But the assumption that he was the better artist because as a man he could not hold himself in hand, is worse than foolish. Pope was a far better artist, and a typical one, pursuing, it might be said, "art for art's sake" before ever the phrase was invented; and yet, so far from sacrificing to it anything of manly independence, he earned the wherewithal to live, and, having earned it, regarded it, to quote the words of Mr. Leslie Stephen, "as a retaining fee, not a discharge from his duties as an artist." That is not the Bohemian ideal of maintaining "a poet's dignity," but it is one to which Goethe and Shakespeare could have subscribed.

An artist, it is said, must obey his temperament. He should at any rate not be its slave. It is too much to say that even genius is at liberty to do no matter what, and the world is to be thankful. Temperament is but

a poor excuse for a life at best much less effective than it should have been. The artist is not to be judged too harshly. His temperament exposes him possibly to more than ordinary temptation. The conditions of his life may not be of the healthiest and most bracing. It is quite possible that there is something abnormal in art, some insanity in genius. At least the artist is endowed with a nervous system liable from its very delicacy to get out of order; and the exhaustion of his nerve-power, consequent upon the high pressure at which his best work is done, weakens perhaps his powers of defence just at the point where moral sense is open to attack.

The artist, therefore, who gives way to his weakness may plead the artistic temperament as an extenuating circumstance; but he is clearly guilty, and to claim any sort of artistic irresponsibility is something less than manly. It is not contended that artists lead less decent lives than the rest of the world, though they may take less pains to hide their lapses than some to whom respectability is a part of their stock in trade, but only that the plea of the artistic life is no justification of ill-living. The personal convenience of the artist (art is essentially personal) excuses nothing contrary to the general good. An artist is not exempt from the obligations of citizenship; and if the Bohemian's contempt for the Philistine implies that he is, then his taunt of Philistinism recoils upon himself. The claims of art and of life may not always be easy to adjust; but they are usually adjustable. If, peradventure, they should clash, it is not a case in which a man's judgment should desert him, nor an artist's sense of proportion. It is only an overweening esteem of the importance of art, or of his own importance,

which, when it comes, for example, to a choice between art and morals, can blind a responsible being to his plain duty, or prevent him from perceiving that here is the occasion for the man to come to the front, and not slink behind the artist. Grant all the claims of art upon the artist, and suppose (what is by no means granted) that right conduct were contrary to the interests of art,—why, then, the artist would be called upon to risk his art, as men are called upon to risk their lives; and it would be nothing less than cowardice to hold back. There is a point of view from which a man of any principle, or self-restraint, or good repute, is thought to be quite lost to art. Art, it is contended, has nothing to do with morals. Your every impulse must run away with you, or it is a sign you have no passion, no temperament. To study seriously, to take a degree, to marry fairly, to earn your living, pay your rent, keep decent company,—what is that but to confess, in acts each one more Philistine than the other, that you are not an artist? Art thrives upon disorder! It is spontaneous, free, the overflow of genius and originality! Was ever such perversity? The Philistine, it is true, is no judge of art; but of its wholesomeness Brown, Jones, or Robinson, is a better judge than Rossetti or de Maupassant.

The excesses of Bohemia being what they are, no wonder it is a terror to the timid and a scandal to the conventional. Yet there is in sober truth no just reason why its inhabitants should not be as sternly steadfast to a high purpose as the great Bohemian reformer Huss himself, as brave in defence of true artistic individuality as the little body of Bohemian patriots who made their gallant stand for nationality and freedom. The Bohemianism

worthy of respect is not a pose but a stand against oppression, a severance from social orthodoxy, necessary to the devoted pursuit of an artistic ideal. Whether art is worth the sacrifice is a question men will answer according to their appreciation of art. To the artist what he gives up is no sacrifice, and, were it ten times a sacrifice, it is the price at which he saves his soul alive. And yet perhaps he pays more dearly than he knows. There is a sacrifice to which he hardly gives heed enough. Too absolute detachment from the affairs of

life does cost him something. Living exclusively in the world of art, in his dreams and among dreamers like himself, he loses hold upon the realities. Engrossed in art, he is apt to let pass the duties of good citizenship, and not seriously to heed the world and what is going on in it. An artist is doomed in any case to an outlook through the spectacles of art; but a real man should at least look things in the face, and take God's world for almost as serious as his own creations.

LEWIS F. DAY.

ODE TO JAPAN.

CLASP hands across the world,
 Across the dim sea-line,
 Where with bright flags unfurled
 Our navies breast the brine ;
 Be this our plighted union blest,
 Oh ocean-thronèd empires of the East and West !

Here, rich with old delays,
 Our ripening freedom grows,
 As through the unhasting days
 Unfolds the lingering rose ;
 Through sun-fed calm, through smiting shower,
 Slow from the pointed bud outbreaks the full-orbed flower.

But yours, —how long the sleep,
 How swift the awakening came !
 As on your snow-fields steep
 The suns of summer flame ;
 At morn the aching channels glare ;
 At eve the rippling streams leap on the ridgèd stair.

'Twas yours to dream, to rest,
 Self-centred, mute, apart,
 While out beyond the West
 Strong beat the world's wild heart ;
 Then in one rapturous hour to rise,
 A giant fresh from sleep, and clasp the garnered prize !

Here, from this English lawn
 Ringed round with ancient trees,
 My spirit seeks the dawn
 Across the Orient seas.
 While dark the lengthening shadows grow,
 I paint the land unknown, which yet in dreams I know.

Far up among the hills
 The scarlet bridges gleam,
 Across the crystal rills
 That feed the plunging stream ;
 The forest sings her drowsy tune ;
 The sharp-winged cuckoo floats across the crescent moon.

Among the blue-ranged heights
 Dark gleam the odorous pines ;
 Star-strewn with holy lights
 Glimmer the myriad shrines ;
 At eve the seaward-creeping breeze .
 Soft stirs the drowsy bells along the temple frieze.

Your snowy mountain draws
 To Heaven its tranquil lines ;
 Within, through sulphurous jaws,
 The molten torrent shines ;
 So calm, so bold your years shall flow,
 Pure as yon snows above, a fiery heart below.

From us you shall acquire
 Stern labour, sterner truth,
 The generous hopes that fire
 The spirit of our youth ;
 And that strong faith we reckon ours,
 Yet have not learned its strength, nor proved its dearest powers

And we from you will learn
 To gild our days with grace,
 Calm as the lamps that burn
 In some still holy place ;
 The lesson of delight to spell,
 To live content with little, to serve beauty well.

Your wisdom, sober, mild,
 Shall lend our knowledge wings ;
 The star, the flower, the child,
 The joy of homely things,
 The gracious gifts of hand and eye,
 And dear familiar peace, and sweetest courtesy.

Perchance, some war-vexed hour,
 Our thunder-throated ships
 Shall thrud the foam, and pour
 The death-sleet from their lips ;
 Together raise the battle-song,
 To bruise some impious head, to right some tyrannous wrong.

But best, if knit with love,
 As fairer days increase,
 We twain shall learn to prove
 The world-wide dream of peace ;
 And, smiling at our ancient fears,
 Float hand in faithful hand across the golden years.

ARTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON.

NOVELS WITH A MORAL.

THE productions of an art are usually regarded by the great public rather as means to ends than as ends in themselves. Pictures, poems, plays, all as a general rule must have some further object besides the æsthetic pleasure they are designed to give. Occidental humanity, and more especially the English race, holds the idea that pleasure of itself is in a sense wicked. Consequently the beauty which pleases, unless it be wedded to some ethical or religious lesson, is often accounted worldly and vain. Oriental ideals are different; beauty itself is divine, and ethics can raise it no higher. From time to time we do hear the cry of art for art's sake, but the cry is for the most part dull and meaningless to our ears. Usually it serves to awaken the enthusiasm of those who are bored with moralising, or to arrest the attention of those who are seeking for a new pose. Here and there, irrespective of race or country, there exists the man who seeks the ideal of beauty, making no question of its use, preaching no sermon. To the Eastern mind, with its love of abstract speculation, this is usually patent; to the Western with its materialism and utilitarianism it seems cloudy, idle, unreal, and, not infrequently, wicked. Whether it is the wave of Puritanism which passed over Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that is responsible for this temperament, or whether the temperament is responsible for the Puritanism, it is impossible to decide; probably each accentuated the other.

The great misfortune of artistic production is that it is almost bound to be accommodated to the taste of some person or persons other than its producer. For the sake of a livelihood or, it may be, for the more subtle object of fame, artists are usually tempted to desert, consciously or unconsciously, ideals. Various attempts have at different times been made to obviate this evil. Literary academies, patrons, and cliques have striven to free genius,—or let us say talent, for genius can free itself—from the chains of public approbation. But it is easy to see that such remedies serve only to narrow the public to which the artist has to appeal. Sometimes the desire for liberty from the restraints of public approval has induced artists to combine into schools, and even to bind themselves by vows to certain ideals. Such devices have, however, never proved completely successful; they are bound to become irksome sooner or later, either because unfettered genius transcends such limits, or because the desire for fame or wealth induces the artist to meet the public taste half-way. Possibly in the future we may have a combination of idealistic publishers or picture-dealers, who will consent to force public taste upwards at the expense, for the moment, of their incomes. But even then, when the rival firms are bankrupt, it is probable that the combination will once more conform to verdicts of popular taste. The effect of this has been to make the works of the majority of artists of all kinds in varying degrees reflec-

tions of the age in which they live. He who seeks to please aims at what is likely to please ; but he who would teach, couches his lessons in such forms as will best commend themselves : in different degrees the public tastes, characteristics, and ideals must be reflected in the result. Where, however, there is that vague something which we call genius, it often seeks neither to please nor to teach ; then and then alone is the work really independent of its public. Something of an individual bent there always is, greater or less according to the power of the artist ; but his very individuality, apart from any definite or indefinite attempt to win public applause, is naturally impregnated with the ideals and aspirations of his age and race. At all events much originality would seem to be rare in art, and, where it does apparently exist, is often found rather to have proceeded from than to have inspired some new movement.

All this is, of course, far more marked in the case of the fine than of the useful arts. And of the fine arts themselves it would seem to apply most particularly to the branch of literature which is called the novel. For if we go with Bacon and divide literature into the three branches of history, philosophy, and poetry, or, to make the root-idea of the classification clearer, into those forms which proceed more particularly from memory, reason, and imagination respectively, it is at once obvious that the third is the one from which the novel originally springs. That is to say, belonging, as it does, to the most æsthetic type of literature, and being perhaps the lightest and least permanent modification of that type, it lives greatly on mere momentary approbation, and consequently reflects most the ephemeral public tastes of its time. Each of these branches of

literature tends to invade the domains of the others ; indeed the worth of this classification has been impugned on the score of the impossibility of any one type existing without some element of one or both of the others. The novel, by its descent from the epic or narrative poem, is closely connected with history, and early in its career imported into itself something of philosophy. It is this importation of philosophy which forms the novel with a moral. In this connection we might remark that it is, as a rule, neither the moral deduced from the incidents, nor the fact that the incidents actually occurred, which makes a novel a permanent classic. Evanescent as the novel by its own attributes necessarily is, yet the permanency it does sometimes attain is usually due more to those attributes than to the force of the imported historical or philosophical features.

To trace accurately and exhaustively the story as a literary form is almost impossible, and certainly unnecessary for our present purpose ; but we may indicate generally a certain number of distinct lines of development. The stories of the East, dealing chiefly with supernatural marvels, are the first to be set aside in our present subject. The type existed in English literature and is to be found chiefly in the chap-books of the sixteenth century. But the moralising element never intruded to any great extent. Another of the great branches of fiction is the chivalric story in all its different homes and periods. As the stories of marvels were to the commons of the marketplace, so were the stories of chivalry to the lords of the castle. On the whole free from moralising, the fact that their main theme dealt with ideal virtues and characters caused them to inculcate certain lessons in the rude morality of the times. More-

over in a later development of this type, the *ARCADIA* of Sir Philip Sidney, we find that among other additions and variations the author develops that sententiousness which definitely draws the moral of his incidents, and scatters his pages over with moral maxims and apophthegms. With the *CHANSONS DE GESTE*, with *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*, with *Fryars Bacon*, *Bungay*, *Rush* and the rest of them, we have little to do; morals may be, but as a rule are not, drawn from them, and we must pass on to what more directly concerns our present subject.

From the twelfth century onward we find floating about Europe, chiefly among the humbler classes of society, a type of story essentially different from those referred to above, though sharing with the stories of the marvelous their Eastern origin. This was the short tale, realistic in its manner, often comic, and often didactic in its character. Such are the French *FABLIAUX*, the *GESTA ROMANORUM*, the *SEVEN WISE MEN OF EPHESUS*, and many others. Many of these reached England and were translated or copied by English writers, of whom the most notable is of course Chaucer. We are accustomed to regard it as essential that a novel should be in prose and not in verse, and we consequently do not as a rule regard *THE CANTERBURY TALES* as novels. Why this should be so is not entirely clear. In Chaucer's England the contrary, if anything, was the case, because prose was not deemed so suitable a vehicle for literature as verse. In proof of this the apologies which herald the only two of *THE CANTERBURY TALES* that are in prose may be quoted. When the Host stops Chaucer's "Rime of Sire Thopas" he says to him:

Sire, at o word, thou shalt no lenger
rime.
Let se wher thou canst tellen aught in
geste,

Or tellen in prose somewhat at the leste,
In which ther be som mirthe or som
doctrine.

To which Chaucer replies:

I wol you tell a litel thing in prose,
That oughte liken you, as I suppose,
Or elles, certes, ye ben to dangerous.
It is a moral tale vertuous.

Here in a word, as Mr. Raleigh says in his *HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL*, the Host positively invites Chaucer to produce the first English novel. Chaucer, however, produces not so much a novel as a didactic allegory. And again, when the Parson is called upon for his tale he says:

I cannot geste *rom, ram, ruf*, by my
letter,
And, God wote, rime hold I but litel
better.
And therefore, if you list, I wol not
glose,
I wol you tell a litel tale in prose.

And with this preface he proceeds to deliver a treatise on the Deadly Sins and their cure. From these indications, and from a general survey of the literature of the time, we gather that prose was not in general regarded as a vehicle for anything but a popular anecdote or a didactic disquisition, and that, though the didactic and comic tales of the Continent had penetrated to Europe, they were not to be rendered in prose.

In the fifteenth century, however, they began to be translated into English prose, which the work of Mandeville and of Malory and his contemporaries caused to be regarded as a sufficiently dignified medium for literature. Here, then, are the first novels with a moral in English. Those who are unwilling to seek the originals in the translations printed by Wynkyn de Worde may find some of the stories, with alterations and additions and with the moral more or less left to be inferred, in such varied

productions as Gower's *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*, Chaucer's *MAN OF LAWES TALE*, Shakespeare's *KING LEAR* and *MERCHANT OF VENICE*, Barham's *LEECH OF FOLKESTONE*, Longfellow's *KING ROBERT OF SICILY*, and *THE STAFF AND SCRIP* of Rossetti. And what is to be said of these stories? Great literary productions they certainly were not. An anecdote was told, often coarse, often dull, rarely neither; to this was commonly tacked a laboured moral, sometimes explaining the story as an allegory, sometimes merely drawing a lesson from the incidents related. The stories were not natives of English soil, and have not survived in the form of a novel. Nevertheless they deserve mention as showing that the idea of utilising fiction as a medium for a homily is as old as the eleventh century in Europe and survived up to the thirteenth and fourteenth in England. Then, as now, the story was welcomed by the saintly-minded for the sake of the moral, and the moral swallowed by the worldly for the sake of the story.

The first great original English novel was the *EUPHUES* of John Lyly. To call this strange work a novel with a moral would be incorrect. The reason why the reader finds it so hard to reconcile the *EUPHUES* with his idea of a novel, is that the story, such as it is, forms so slight and unimportant a part of the whole work. Ten lines would suffice to sketch all the important incidents of the book. The really noticeable features are three: the style, with its laboured and continued alliteration, antithesis, and allusion; the pseudo-scientific description of the characteristics and habits of the flora and fauna of Nature; and the continual moralising, with the occasional divergence into some such homily as "A cooling card for all fond lovers," or

"How the life of a young man should be led." Here we have several of the most notable characteristics of the court of Queen Elizabeth. Firstly, there is imitation of Italian imitations of a little known classical style of Rome or Greece or both combined, which was the new learning among people of fashion and quality; secondly, the floods of the apocryphal lore of the *Bestiaries*, which were as much an intellectual disease of that age as statistical calculations are of our own; and thirdly, and here especially the author's own personality comes out, the traces of deep thinking on the problems of life, which formed the great undercurrent of the sparkling tide of Elizabethan life and literature. Not yet, however, were the moral and the novel assimilated one to the other; hardly indeed had they any connection at all. The system of taking for hero a prig and making him enter into, and then moralise upon, the fashionable vices of the time is not likely to be entirely successful. To the profane reader the long-winded moralities are apt to be tiresome; to the pious the experiences which called them forth are apt to be shocking. Nevertheless Euphuism became the fashion; ladies of the Court talked and wrote in the style, and, we may hope, thought out the morals.

In a work published shortly after this famous novel a new type of story was introduced into England, this time from Spain. *THE UNFORTUNATE TRAVELLER, OR THE LIFE OF JACK WILTON*, was an English attempt at the picaresque romance, that is to say the realistic description of the knaveries and adventures of a cheery, witty, successful rascal. This type in its inception can only be said to have a bad moral, in that success and prosperity attend the rogue of a hero, but to it is partially at any rate due

the development of the realistic novel to which we shall shortly have to refer as the most important type of novel with a moral.

But before coming to the epoch of realism let us linger for a moment on one of the most unique figures in our whole literature. John Bunyan is the novelist of Puritan England. What he wrote was allegory; his moral far outweighed his incident in importance, and he and his followers would have been the first to spurn the title of novelist for him. Nevertheless the fact remains. His imagination and his story-telling power would at any other time and in any other circumstances have produced a history of adventures, or his analytic observation a psychological romance. But had it not been for his religious predilections it is probable that he would never have followed so dignified a model of style, and possible that he would never have written at all. Artificial in a sense as was his style, didactic as was his purpose, he does not, like Lyly, weary even the irreligious. His work was not inartistic; he does not conceal his moral in his story, nor do his teachings crowd out the incidents. The reader has the incidents presented to him and is left to form his own conclusions as to the exact lesson, though of course no great penetration is required to do so.

Morals played no very important part in the literature which accompanied the reaction against Puritanism; and it is not, therefore, till we come to the more settled atmosphere of the eighteenth century that we need look for any moralising novels. Meanwhile a great change for literature had come about. There had grown up, perhaps for the first time in our country, a genuine reading public. No longer were the scholars, the ecclesiastics, or the courtiers the sole patrons of their several literary

favourites. Cliques had in a great measure yielded to a public which paid for what it read. More than ever, therefore, was literature, and especially the novel, likely to reflect the chief characteristics of the age.

If ever any man wrote simply to please his readers and to charm their money from them, that did Daniel Defoe. Developing the picaresque romance from the story of a knavish life to the story of a life, and appreciating the fact that the materialism of the age demanded at all events an appearance of truth, he passed on from his more or less fictitious biographies of real, to those of unreal people. And he was wise enough to see that Puritanism had left sufficient traces on the public he addressed for it to desire some moral teaching to be thrown in. Who does not remember poor Crusoe's debit and credit account of the evil and the good in his condition, and his final summing up in a receipt to his Creator for the balance of good? How keenly this must have appealed to the utilitarian and crude moralists of his time! Again, let anyone read the author's preface to *COLONEL JACK*, which in its main outlines follows more closely than any the lines of the picaresque romance.

The various turns of his fortune [he writes] in different scenes of life make a delightful field for the reader to wander in; a garden where he may gather wholesome and medicinal fruits, none noxious or poisonous; where he will see virtue, and the ways of wisdom, everywhere applauded, honoured, encouraged, and rewarded: vice and extravagance attended with sorrow, and every kind of infelicity: and at last, sin and shame going together, the offender meeting with reproach and contempt, and the crimes with detestation and punishment.

In the preface to *THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF DUNCAN CAMPBELL* we find the same strain.

Instead of making them (the Ladies and Gentlemen of Great Britain) a bill of fare, out of patchwork romances of polluting scandal, the good old gentleman who wrote the *Adventures of my Life* has made it his business to treat them with a great variety of entertaining passages, which always terminate in morals that tend to the edification of all readers, of whatever sex, age, or profession.

Thus did Defoe ensure the popularity of his work, by assuring the prudish that all his realistic descriptions of low life, so fascinating in themselves, were narrated unto edification.

The next great novelist to appear was almost a greater moralist than any of his predecessors, if we except Bunyan. Living in his coterie of sentimental ladies the little printer Richardson had once assisted three young women to write their love-letters. In this and in many other ways he had had unique opportunities of probing into the depths of the feminine heart and mind. When in his middle-age he was asked to "prepare a volume of familiar letters in a common style on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves," his experiences and his view of life led him to suggest that he should also teach them how "to think and act in common cases." These objects he decided to forward by utilising a story of country life which suited his particular style and sentiments. Thus there grew under his hand "*PAMELA, OR VIRTUE REWARDED*, in a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents: published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the young of both sexes." Very different as was the success of this adventure from what he had anticipated, it nerved him to make his further famous efforts in a similar but bolder manner.

Thus in the eighteenth century was the moralising novel firmly established. In Defoe's case the moralising had been slightly forced, but cunningly interwoven with the story; in Richardson's the moral was uppermost in his mind. Nevertheless Richardson's art in unfolding the story, his minute dissection of the human heart, and above all his intimate knowledge of the feminine character, made the whole a work of art. Not all Fielding's clever parodying could obscure the greatness of a genius who incidentally happened to be a prig. It is not for the morals that we now read Defoe and Richardson; debit and credit morality is fortunately now going out of date. Still, as a reflection of the moral standard of the age even the moralising is interesting, and it cannot be denied that these authors genuinely attempted to make the moral an integral portion of their general plan instead of a mere accretion on the story, or a series of sermons sufficient to swamp even the most stirring of incidents.

The school contemporary with Richardson was ushered in by Fielding's *JOSEPH ANDREWS*. In this book, which he designed for a parody of *PAMELA*, the author soon strayed from his original track and struck out a path for himself. Both Fielding and Smollett wrote chiefly stories allied to the picaresque romance as developed by Defoe. A certain strain of sententiousness there sometimes was in their works, but it was of anything rather than of a propagandist or highly moral nature. The method of Fielding, in whose stories this is more common, was to let his various characters express their various views on the incidents in which he places them; these views are by no means necessarily those of the author himself, who devotes a page or even a chapter here and there to discussing

in the first person the views, actions, and characters of his *dramatis personæ*. This was a great advance on the epistolary method of Richardson. There the author himself, teeming with moral lessons, never had the chance of giving them to the world in the first person; the lessons had to be crammed into the mouths and actions of the comparatively few characters; and the result was that the characters were usually either of the most irritating virtue or of the blackest vice, the former only liable to misfortune, the latter to conversion. The saving grace of humour was not granted to Richardson. He put the sentiments of a prudish old ladies' man into the mouths of all his virtuous characters, and painted in lurid colours the fashionable vices he had but little opportunity of observing. The moral is too obvious, the characters too arbitrarily drawn for any but the rudest intellects.

The eighteenth century in England was a period of which Dr. Johnson expresses the cardinal theory when he says "we are affected only as we believe." Whatever may have been true of the Englishman of that century, this is certainly not, as Dr. Johnson thought it was, true of human nature in general. We are not only affected as we believe, but also as we imagine. Moreover we are undoubtedly affected and influenced by our emotions, which have very little to do with reasoned belief. Nevertheless this theory seems to a great extent true of that particular age; to it must be ascribed that realism in literature of which we have spoken, to it also that which we have called the debit and credit school of morality. The story had to seem reasonably true before it could interest; the morality had more or less to be proved by results before it could be accepted. Another characteristic

of the age, produced by the rapid movements of states and peoples in the direction of democracy, was the prevalence of theorists and propagandists. Accordingly theories and propaganda found their way, though fortunately not universally, into many of the novels of the time. Mrs. Behn's *ORONOKO*, Shebbeare's *LYDIA*, and many others represent in the most unnatural manner the theory of the natural man. To go into this here would be out of place; let it suffice to say that in the return to a state of Nature was to be sought the panacea for human afflictions, and the novelists took a savage and burdened him with every virtue to prove their theory. The pursuit of the panacea is also to be noted in that remarkable work, which has been called rather a study in imaginative ethics than a novel, *RASSELAS PRINCE OF ABYSSINIA*. The prince, with every concomitant of happiness about him, is not happy; he therefore goes abroad to seek happiness in the world. A pastoral life, solitude, marriage, pleasure, all are discussed and thrown aside. The best that can be said even for virtue is that all that it can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience, but we must remember that patience must suppose pain. Pessimistic as all this is, still it marks a steadier outlook, and is more real than the exaltation of a state of savagery. The lesser physician will often have suggested a cure long before the greater has satisfied himself as to the complaint. Johnson wrote a work which is either one of the greatest novels the world has seen, or one of the worst. In most things that belong more particularly to a novel it is bad, but it is so great a masterpiece of nondescript literature that the novel would claim it with pride as a member of its own class.

The school that has been styled the Tea-Table Novelists, comprising among others Fanny Burney, Jane Austen, and Mrs. Gaskell, has unobtrusively preached its gentle and respectable morality without destroying its artistic excellence. The virtuous are rewarded, the wicked are punished in the good old style, but the characters are less stereotyped, the situations more human than most of those delineated by Richardson. Fortunately, or unfortunately, our ideals of domestic virtues have changed since the days of Miss Austen, so that her moralities are now but a historic relic. Still the fact that the reader is more or less unconscious of the sermon, and is really interested in the psychology and incidents of the works, no doubt commends the ideals these gentlewomen were preaching more to us than many a lesson more modern and less artistically interwoven with the story.

The inevitable reaction against the realism and materialism of the eighteenth century came in the Romantic Revival. Whether we consider it in the supernatural romances of Clara Reeve, of Mrs. Radcliffe, and of Horace Walpole, in the historical romances of Scott, or in the psychological romances of the Brontës, we come to the same conclusion, that romance has had in literature but little connection with didactic tendencies. We meet with no more important novels with a moral until we come to the middle of the nineteenth century.

It is impossible here to do anything like justice to the magnificent outburst of fiction which signals the middle of the last century. It was a return to realism, but to a far truer realism than had been known before. It was appreciated that a minute observation of life and char-

acter was absolutely essential to true realism. It was not enough to delude like Defoe, to know thoroughly a portion of human nature like Richardson. Appearance, name, circumstances, superficial characteristics, inward springs of action, all must be studied and reproduced to attain a true picture of life. No one has the right to preach from an isolated fragment of life. As Matthew Arnold said of Sophocles, so might we say of the great novelists, that they "saw life steadily and saw it whole." The old evil of generalising from one or two particular instances has in the fiction of our own day revived; but it was wonderfully absent from the work of the great artists of the time of Thackeray. Let us content ourselves with the consideration of the methods of the three greatest, of Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot. As a moralist Dickens was far beneath the other two. The lessons he had to teach, the abuses he strove to remove, were concrete and narrow. Whether it was the evils of the Debtors' Prison or the absurdities of Departmental Red Tape that he wished to show, whether the cruelty of a Quilp, or the knavery of a Uriah Heep, it was always a single circumscribed object of attack. The reason why Dickens was greater than the didactic novelists of the eighteenth century is because his pictures of life were truer, his grasp of the variety of human character stronger. As a moralist his chief point of inferiority is due to that very art of caricature which establishes him as a humorist. Caricature involves the exaggeration of peculiarities, and, however valuable this may be for provoking laughter, it is apt to be a fatal bar to propounding ethics. When Dickens was teaching a lesson, he was apt to exaggerate in each of his characters the

peculiarity necessary to their place in his scheme. Squeers and Quilp are just a little too ogreish, as Esther Summerson and Florence Dombey are too gentle and sweet. It is not by much that he fails in this respect, and when he is not moralising he often does not fail at all. But this is the reason why in his works, as in those of many another great novelist, the minor characters are better drawn than the heroes and heroines. In the less important folk the author can let his fancy play aided by his observation of human nature, the chief actors must have the peculiarity which marks their place in the chief incidents accentuated, and it is often over-accentuated. Dickens's method was to inculcate lessons of conduct or to urge the removal of abuses by arousing the sympathies and antipathies, not often by appealing directly to the reason. How pitiable or loveable is this, how abominable or hateful is that, is the train of thought he wished to induce. At times he succeeded, but his greatness lies outside the sphere of novels with a moral and must be left to other criticisms.

The method of Thackeray is entirely different. He seems to take his reader with him to an eminence, whence he points out the figures moving in the world below. "Look," he seems to say, "at these poor creatures toiling and suffering, resting and rejoicing; note their characters; let us watch them and moralise a little." We are hardly conscious of any definite lesson; here is vice, there is virtue. Vice is not always punished, nor, at all events superficially, does it seem unattractive; virtue is often insipid, rarely heroic. The very good people are often bores, the very bad often amusing. This is the world; make what you can of it. The author is willing to give you his opinions on

a point here and there, and does so in a human, kindly way. One thing alone can make him really angry, and that is a snob. But even a snob may make himself useful, and his snobbishness may be funny. All this may seem very slipshod to the upright, almost wicked to the saintly. But Thackeray and the mass of us are not upright saints; we can accept the facts of human nature, even if they are not strictly moral according to the received code. Thackeray's moral is perhaps not the loftiest, but it cannot lead far astray, for it is based upon truth. Human nature may be full of foibles, faults, and vanities, but it is human nature for all that, and we know it and love it. Make the best of it, there it is. To point a moral from a story of human incident and character, it is necessary that the delineation of character and incident should be true to nature, otherwise the lesson neither appeals to reason, nor to emotions, and consequently fails. This is above all what Thackeray appreciated. Whatever differences in method and style Thackeray and Dickens may present they have one feature in common; they teach or try to teach their lessons by a direct appeal to the emotions.

George Eliot, and after her Mr. Meredith while seeking the same truth which had been the first principle of their two predecessors, taught mainly by an appeal to the reason. The theory of George Eliot is that character is not to be regarded as simple and constant, but as complex and varying. The result is that throughout life occasions arise for decision between the promptings of the one or of the other side of the character. From the consequences of such isolated decisions arise the successes and failures of life. No one can deny that sympathy with all

the details of the life she knew was an attribute of George Eliot, but emotions, she seems to say, are not to run riot and draw morals without the assistance of reason. Mr. Meredith, with a somewhat similar method, teaches differently; sentimentalism he thinks a fault alike in letters and in life; it is closely allied to the animal side of human nature and is the cause of many of our social evils. This is a different lesson, but it is taught with the same reasoned sympathy as is claimed by George Eliot. His characters are less varying because they have often to exhibit a particular quality or group of qualities in the scheme of the work; but this does not go so far as to border on caricature, for the true study of humanity has developed beyond that point. It is hard to say whether we are to regard Mr. Meredith's work as an end or as a beginning. In truth to natural characters, in the absence of sententiousness, in the artistic combinations of novel and moral he may be regarded as the consummation of a school. In the kind of morals he points, and in the way in which he indicates a problem of society rather than suggests a rule, he is the pioneer of many who have never gone so far as he goes.

One of the most marked characteristics of our age is a certain scepticism,—or let us translate and say, a spirit of enquiry. We cannot or will not accept a dogma unless we have no alternative. Rules of conduct and of society which have been accepted throughout the history of civilisation to-day require defence. Consequently the novelist, as also the playwright, has developed a new method. An institution or a custom is taken, marriage more often than any, and a story is told in which its defects are made apparent. The problem as to whether it is to be

upheld or not is left unsolved, when both sides have vigorously sustained their arguments. Conversation and contrast are required to attract the public; the rival arguments are therefore exhibited in brilliant (or what is designed to be brilliant) repartee, and the most painful features of realism are often set off in sharp relief from scenes of the most artificial or Arcadian innocence. The fierce punishment the world metes out to the fallen woman is inflicted amid rural peace and simplicity; a pair of comic, and impossible, children give the title and a back-ground to a work which deals with the most sordid and miserable problems of fashionable morality. Ill-executed as it so often is, this method can often prejudice, sometimes disgust; yet in its successful expositions it is capable of much. If you would arouse the emotions and appeal at the same time to the reason, it is in the crude contrasts of life that your point can be best made. People are to be amused, but they are also to be taught; nor are lessons which we can apply to our friends unpleasant for us to study. The life exhibited must be true, the problems vital to please the modern mind; and our hurried and jaded minds must above all things have what pleases them. Thus again we find the tendencies of the age reflected in its literature. No subject is too lofty or too debased for full treatment, no views too bold or too unconventional for exposition. The breaking up of the old order without the superimposition of the new is freely accepted; the faultiness of a system is often exhibited, while the obvious logical result of its abandonment is shirked. The unusual and bizarre attract; the obvious and commonplace repel. The prevailing weakness is a certain looseness no less of morals than of logic and style. A smart saying often pleases more than

a heroic or beautiful action, a sharp contrast than a gradual climax. Here are the tendencies of a certain section of the English people, and that section comprises most of the regular novel-readers. Something of good there is in all this. It is right to be able to tolerate a genuine realism ; it is good to think at all on what have become the problems of life. The man who can take the rules his ancestors made for his conduct and neither question nor break them, may or may not be virtuous, but he almost certainly is a fool. The man who starts for himself and asks how far reason can take him, and where human nature runs foul of it, and who, after struggling for the key to the problems and the road to the good and the right, very likely fails to find either, is very rarely a fool and very rarely vicious.

And when all is said and the systems and morals surveyed, does the novel really teach lessons of ethics or advance propaganda? Has it really served to remove abuses, to elucidate problems, and to ventilate wrongs? Who can say? Something is done by making a thing a feature of general conversation, and that a successful novel can do. Something too is done by discovering any loophole at all in our busy lives for ethical or abstract

problems. But whether those who read the novel most assiduously are those who will learn and think, whether the lesson we may perhaps glean is not invariably applied away from ourselves, whether the moral merely serves as in the old cases to excuse the lightness, and other and more doubtful fascinations, of the story, are questions which cannot but occur. And one other point arises. Even if the novel has assisted in the didactic field, have the morals been advantageous to the literary form of the novel? So much has the novel been imbued with this didactic quality that it is hard to see what history it could otherwise have had. Nevertheless there could have, and indeed there has been a class of novels at most times more or less flourishing which is neither excused nor popularised by a moral, and in it are to be found some of the greatest. The truth is that it is not the presence or absence of a moral, be it good or bad, which affects, more than any other incident, the excellence of the story ; that depends on other things. A novel may be a classic despite its moral, or it may die with ever so lofty a lesson stillborn.

B. N. LANGDON-DAVIES.

SLAVES OF THE OAR.

WHENEVER the subject of rowing is mentioned there comes up before us at once a picture of an unhappy man who, by reason of his weight, was put into the middle of the boat and when there was subjected to a series of insults from a fierce person riding along the bank on a horse or a bicycle. We (for we were that man) can still hear the hoarse voice shrieking denunciations of Five, and commanding him to "get his hands away," "not to bucket," "to come up evenly on that slide," "to keep his eyes in the boat," with a thousand other pieces of peremptory advice, all to be followed instantly on pain of every most fearful anathema that mind of coach could conceive. We may be wrong, but it seemed to us that the rowing-coach becomes more objugatory in proportion as his men become more experienced in the art of rowing. Certainly when we first took our seat in a "tub-pair," displaying, like Dionysus in Charon's ferry-boat, a lamentable ignorance as to whether it was proper to sit "at the oar or upon it," we were treated with great and patient kindness, and were much flattered at the end of our instruction on being told that we had a "keen blade,"—though we had no sort of idea what was meant thereby, and indeed are in some doubt even now. But as we gradually learned that the style of the traditional waterman is a thing to be avoided, the coach seemed to think us ripe for more energetic counsel and began to let his caustic tongue play on us like a lambent flame; and a great relief it must have been to him after so many weeks of self-repression.

To be strictly honest we must admit that Four, Three, and Bow also came in for a good deal of abuse, and that Five was not quite alone in his misery; and doubtless we all deserved it, every word. Nevertheless it rankled at the time, and it seemed to us unreasonable that when we rowed with energy and displayed enthusiasm we were accused of *bucketing*, and when, in our eagerness to amend this fault, we relaxed our efforts a little we were promptly told that we were *sugaring* or *slumming*. Often in the evening we conferred with Four, Three, and Bow on the situation, and spoke with seriousness and freedom. Three was usually the most emphatic, and he would stand on the hearthrug with his back to the fire polishing his pipe on the palm of his hand while he discoursed. "I'm beastly sore," he would say to sympathetic ears. "I tell you what it is, this rowing's mere slavery, and you don't even get any thanks for it; the harder you work, the more you get cursed. I believe it's like fishing; you're born so,—or else you've been at Eton," he added on one occasion in confused indignation. "Why on earth," he went on, "I gave up football for it I can't imagine. I would have been in the team by now." Modesty, let us add, was not so apparent in Three's conversation as was his Scottish origin. Thereupon it appeared that all four of us would have achieved laurels at any other branch of athletics. Five, we remember, expressed his humble opinion that a very efficient forward had been lost to the world of Rugby football when he dedicated himself

to the oar. But we arrived at no definite conclusion, for at this point Bow hinted that Five was mistaken and that the utmost he could have hoped for might have been a "blue" for chess,—provided, of course, that he had known how to play the game. The talk now developed a personal note, and the subject of rowing was dropped.

Many a time did we declaim after this sort, but still we turned up at the boat-house dutifully every day and earned our meed of cursing with the sweat of our bodies. Once even, when Stroke was down with influenza, and the crew was allowed to take a day or two off, it was Three who proposed going out in a four-oar, taking the coach in the stern, and it was Five, Four, and Bow who supported him. That the said four-oar was upset within a few yards of the landing-stage and that the coach, who was unchanged, ruined a most gorgeous waistcoat thereby, detracts nothing from the merit of our intentions. These things will happen, and a coach ought to know better than to go out on the treacherous Cam without changing his raiment. Hereby we solemnly declare that the responsibility for the accident does not rest with Five, and if this should meet the eye of the gentleman who was seated in the stern when it occurred we would beg him to take a note of it.

We never became a good oar; that is to say we were never more than a stop-gap or an experiment on a sliding seat, and we did not attain to the dignity of a share in the May races. On these great occasions it was our duty to stand and shout; at least that is how we interpreted it, for there was, we believe, an idea that he who rowed not should run while he shouted. We objected to running, for we considered that it

could not justly be counted as part of the oarsman's functions. But there came a time when we were made to submit to the indignity, and that was when we went into training for the Lent races and were obliged to run several minutes before breakfast. Nor was this the worst of it. If the coach happened to be in a merry mood he would sometimes allow us to get out of the boat at that good hostelry, the Pike and Eel, after we had rowed a course and were weary. But we were never quite sure that it was a kindness, for we had to run home, and the distance to the boat-house is a very good mile,—after a course it seems two. One day we stooped to duplicity in company with Four, and stopped running as soon as our tyrant (who was on a bicycle) was out of sight. Now there is a church-yard through which one must pass on the homeward way, and it is separated from an adjoining meadow by a low wall. As we pursued our leisurely path across this abode of peace we were suddenly horrified to find the face of our coach surveying our progress from the other side of the wall without approval. He upbraided us sternly, and, though we admitted our guilt, we pointed out to him that our duplicity was as nothing to that of a man who got off his bicycle and hid behind a wall for purposes of reconnoitring. Nevertheless he made us run again.

Looking back on the past we cannot imagine how we ever permitted ourselves to go into training. We tremble when we think of the quantity of food we consumed, and we marvel at having been able to digest it without the aid of tobacco. That we never rebelled must have been due to the strength of public opinion, the power of which is almost as great in a college as in a school. Indeed we can only remember one man who,

having committed himself to the oar, was strong enough to break his chain when it came to the question of training. He explained that he was a temperate man on the whole, but that his only object in eating was that he might subsequently smoke. If he went into training then, he would be obliged to eat five times as much as at ordinary times and that would necessitate his being intemperate in the matter of tobacco, for he would require to smoke ten times as much as usual. It was pointed out to him that he would not be allowed to smoke at all, whereupon he said that, in that case, he would assuredly die. So he was allowed to depart in peace, and he became a volunteer and a mighty marksman, and won cups and medals, which shows, among other things, that it is easier to serve one's country than one's college.

It was a great relief when the races were over, and we were free to eat the bread of idleness, and to dismiss the memories of training and its rigours in great clouds of fragrant smoke. We are not now sure whether the consciousness that we had been bumped as much as any boat on the river did not in a way add to our feeling of pride, though at the time we professed great indignation. The golden mean is not always satisfactory, and if one cannot make bumps it is at least something to be able to say that one "went down every night." The boat that merely keeps its place excites no interest. Moreover (we say it with shame) it saves much labour to be bumped early in the proceedings, though we have known it to cause additional trouble. On the last night, for instance, we were bumped as early as is considered decent, so early in fact that the coxswain refused to believe it, and consequently did not hold up his hand in the orthodox manner as a signal

for the other boat to stop rowing. The result was that it did not stop, and rowed into and over us; we saved ourselves by swimming, but by a righteous judgment the coxswain was tied up in the rudder-lines and was nearly drowned. It did not make him penitent, though, for when his error was brought home to him afterwards, he said that if the crew had only rowed decently there would have been no occasion for him to hold up his hand, but, as it was, so incompetent a set of men deserved their ducking.

In these days our normal feeling is one of calm acquiescence in the fact that we row no longer, and something like pity for those misguided ones who have taken our place; and yet there come times when we ask ourselves whether we would not give up all the placid delights of Sandow his exerciser for those glorious but interminable minutes when our heart failed within us, our lungs ceased to perform their office, our ears were filled with the innumerable laughter of ocean, and our eyes saw nothing but Six's straining back. The feelings of the man rowing in a race have been excellently expressed by Mr. R. C. Lehmann in these lines:

What thoughts went flying through
your mind, how fared it, Five, with
you?

But Five made answer solemnly: "I
heard them fire a gun,
No other mortal thing I knew until
the race was done."

It is almost impossible for those who have never rowed to understand what it really means, for the knowledge of it is hardly to be acquired at second-hand, and if it were, there is hardly any literature of the pastime, descriptive literature that is to say, for there are plenty of books

of instruction and statistics. It seems to have been left principally to the Lady-Novelist to set forth the æsthetic side of rowing, and as her idea of an oarsman appears to be based on the size of his forearm, and as her notions of training include a ten o'clock breakfast and a meerschaum pipe, she is hardly a safe guide. There is what purports to be a quotation which we were brought up to believe implicitly, "They all rowed a fast stroke but six rowed faster than anybody;" but it may be apocryphal, for we understood that it was not meant to be satirical, in which case we could have accepted it as fair comment; we have seen such things but we have not known them to receive praise except from the Lady-Novelist. No doubt the popular conception that rowing is closely allied to, if not the same thing as, "being on the water in a boat" is partly due to her. Yet they are distinct arts,—we admit the other to be an art, though it is hardly any better understood—and should not be confused. Of course rowing takes place on the water, but we doubt whether a "light ship" or even a "clinker" can be called a boat except by courtesy. A boat is a large round thing capable of carrying six grown persons, twelve children, four hampers, and an oil-stove, besides the waterman who propels it. That is its capability; but we think, for purposes of being on the water, that these are really rather too many, and for comfort we should suggest that it would about hold two men when a reasonable number of cushions is taken into consideration. But we wander somewhat from the point. To these eighteen people being in this round thing on the water is a form of aquatic carriage-exercise with a banquet to follow, and from it they can gather nothing as to the

sister art. If, however, they were taken and put into two eights, if the waterman was instructed to coach them from the bank with some liberty in respect of language, and if they were made to row (not paddle) a course of a mile and a quarter, they would understand more about it. The idea suggests a nice mathematical problem for the consideration of the ingenious. If six grown persons and twelve children take two hours to cover a distance of a mile and a quarter propelled by a waterman in a round pleasure-boat, how long will the same persons take to cover the same distance in two eights when the waterman is taken away from them? We believe there is no answer. Perhaps, though, it would be well not to make the experiment for who can foresee the consequences? The progress of the eights might recall the horrors recorded by Mr. Kipling's galley-slave:

Our women and our children toiled
beside us in the dark—
They died, we filed their fetters, and
we heaved them to the shark—
We heaved them to the fishes, but so
fast the galley sped,
We had only time to envy, for we
could not mourn our dead.

The Lady-Novelist is, as we have said, much to blame for all this popular ignorance, but she is not alone. With her we must impeach that interesting person, the Ancient Mariner, who discourses of the stern art over his wine. Listening to him, one who knows nothing about it would almost be forced to the conclusion that rowing is composed three parts of blasphemy and one part of carousal, and that the tow-path is nothing more or less than a school of abuse. For truly the Ancient Mariner doth marvellously

relate concerning the sayings of the wild-eyed coach, him of the motto, *Flectere si nequeo superos Acheronta movebo*; and after the ladies are gone he will mouth you some dozen of his rounder oaths with exceeding relish of reminiscence. Furthermore he will carry his audience to the night after the races when he and his crew "drank out the stars and in the sun," and finally, each supporting each with mutual arm, wandered round the college court singing, untunefully perhaps but with right heartiness, the best of all boating-songs, that of Eton. Here is the manner of the singing most admirably set forth by a great writer, who indeed was describing another scene but has anticipated this.

Now we sang this song very well the first time and we sang it again the second time, not so but what you might praise it (if you had been with us all the evening) But when that song was in its third singing, I defy any man (however sober) to have made out one verse from the other, or even the burden from the verses, inasmuch as every man present sang as became convenient to [him], in utterance both of words and tune.

Also he will relate with all fidelity of circumstance how after the singing the coxswain rebelled against the mild persuasion of the rest and announced that he proposed to spend the night in meditation under the stars, or what was left of them, right in the middle of the grassplot sacred by law and custom to Dons and other kinds of "holy vegetable," and how for a while the others tearfully considered the situation and then, determined to save their beloved coxswain at any cost, with resolute concerted action took him and put him to bed; and how this occurred thirteen times, and at the last the coxswain, being more drunken and

therefore more determined, arose from his couch the thirteenth time and repaired again to the grassplot where in the grey dawn he was discovered by a porter.

Thus speaks the Ancient Mariner to the horror of the people, and it is not unlikely that he speaks the truth, as indeed our own small experience can testify; but these things are not rowing. You shall hear as many strange oaths when the University Fifteen falls to it with the men of Cardiff as ever were uttered on the tow-path, and more notable, for the keen discontent of football is expressed in many languages; there are the various inflections of howl born in hardy Scotland, wild Wales, and infuriated Ireland, and under all there is the deep strong bass of the Englishman who will never be a slave, and who requires the other nationalities to "get off my head, damn you, sir!" For good sound swearing we would sooner go to the scene of Rugby football than to any other place; though, from what we have heard or read (we forget which), America should be able to match it with its own variety of the game, in which the teams may choose their own weapons, and lest any should escape, policemen come on after the match armed with spiked clubs to finish off those that remain. It must be an expensive pastime, but productive of magnificent swearing; if indeed it be really so, for we confess our authority is but slight.

Also the bump-supper cannot by any means claim a monopoly of hilarity and strange doings. There are old school dinners (oh the Scotch schools!), football dinners, and private and public rejoicings in comparison with which the bump-supper would seem but a decorous breakfast-party or a game of silent whist. It was not a bump-supper which made two

amiable scholars so enthusiastic that they were fain to climb over a much bespiked ten foot wall, in order that they might tear down a wooden fence belonging to the town and bring it back over the wall as their contribution to the bonfire. Nor was it rowing which inspired the subsequent explanation to the incensed authorities that they did it in "a fit of abstraction."

And yet we have hinted that there is a measure of truth in the stories of the Ancient Mariner. As that other Ancient observes, "there is truth in the cups," and it is possibly due to the fact that people are more interested in these wild tales than in rowing itself, that the talker confines himself to them and so gives the impression that they are rowing, or at least the most important part of it. And what after all are these stories but traditions handed on from one generation of oarsmen to another, a sort of confession of faith in the oar? That they had an origin there can be little doubt, just as there is little doubt that the Homeric songs and the Shakespearean plays had an origin. But we need not therefore conclude that they originated with the Ancient Mariner, any more than we need take it for proved that Homer originated with Wolf or Shakespeare with Mrs. Gallup. For the rest the stories are good stories, and ancient stories, and certain of raising the ready laugh. Take, for instance, that of the coach who laboured along after his crew on foot for half a mile emitting as he ran a curious stream of oaths; finally he bade them easy, surveyed them despondently for some time, and ejaculated piteously, "It's too awful, I can't swear." The Ancient Mariner always tells this tale mentioning the name of the college and the coach. We ourselves have heard it of the

colleges of Exeter, Brazenose, and Wadham in Oxford, and of Pembroke, Caius, and Jesus in Cambridge; and we confess with shame that we have in our turn told it of another college that shall be nameless. Then there is the companion story, generally told at the same time, of the coach who spoke to his crew with a terrible calm: "You're all rowing badly except Six," whereat, we suppose, Six experienced some small feeling of triumph and showed it, for the coach continued incisively, "and he's rowing *damned* badly." There seems to be a certain fascination about bad language in the abstract, and there is nothing that our antique friend enjoys more than telling a story in which the point turns on an oath or oaths. We do not understand why it should be so, but it is also the case that one is always amused by such a story.

We have said that these incidents of the towing-path are matters of tradition, and that they did not originate with the Ancient Mariner, but it does not follow that they do not repeat themselves and happen over again with succeeding generations. Indeed, we could give instances in which they have happened, if not to ourselves, at least to our friends. We were actually in the boat on one occasion when the coxswain perceived that we were running straight into some piles, and in his agitation forgot the proper words of command and exhorted the astonished crew to "Woa!" Of course this produced no effect, and had it not been for the interposition of the coach, who remembered the words for him, the boat would have been crumpled up and the crew with it. We know that this was not the first occasion on which a coxswain has cried "Woa!" for we have heard the Ancient Mariner tell the story more than once, and have

admired the way in which he added to it the observations of the crew and the coach, which we ourselves should blush to record. This seems to be a good opportunity for us to make a statement in this connection, which we hope will counteract the influence of the Ancient Mariner's unwise anecdotes, by which, unintentionally no doubt, he deludes the public. We give our solemn assurance that it is not in the least necessary to learn to swear before you learn to row. We knew several,—no perhaps not several, but we certainly knew one or two oarsmen who did not swear at all. Further we would be disposed to wager a small sum that, with the exception of cricket, any other of the noble sports will call forth as much bad language as rowing and most of them more. We have no acquaintance with golf, otherwise we would instance it boldly, for we hear awful things of it from sources in which we have confidence.

It has just occurred to us that the term *Ancient Mariner* is as liable to misunderstanding as are his stories. He is not necessarily a bishop or a judge, and reverend in years and station; he may be quite young and insignificant, for he is only a person who has left the university, and whose rowing-days are over for that or other reasons. The younger he is the more misleading are his words. When a bishop narrates he can always begin with "In my day," or "When I was up," and that at once gives the impression that those bold bad times are no more. But with the younger sort the present is written on his face and the audience concludes that the bold bad times are in their heyday and that oars, boats, the towing-path, and Blues are things to be mentioned under the breath, so encompassed are they with profane swearing and deep drinking. Let everybody, then, re-

member that the Ancient Mariner is not speaking of rowing at all when he tells his stories, but of other matters which may or may not have something to do with it.

For conversation which really does deal with it one must go, not to the Ancient Mariner, but to the Able-bodied Seaman himself. You shall find him, half a dozen or more of him, sitting on the softest cushions he can obtain and talking profoundly of matters connected with the oar on almost any evening during term-time. He may, it is true, touch lightly on some new expression of abuse that has fallen from the coach's lips during the afternoon, but in the main he will be deeply serious and in earnest as he discusses his own boat and others. Talking of subjects which interest one especially has been stigmatised and is discouraged by the enlightened as *shop*. The higher spirits at a university are always opposed to shop in theory, that is to say to other people's shop. We shall never forget a little breakfast-party given by one of our friends at which he amazed us by a remarkable display of conversational athletics, and seemed to us to be talking for the pleasure of hearing his own voice. No subject came amiss to him; he held forth in the most shameless way and imparted a vast deal of unnecessary information, until the two other guests grew weary and departed. When they were gone we asked him what he did it for, and he told us that the two gentlemen, strangers to each other, were both extremely fond of golf, and that he was afraid they would find it out unless he kept the talk going. For our own part we think a man is more likely to be interesting on a subject in which he is himself interested, and therefore we have no constitutional objection to shop, which is perhaps as well for we used to talk an amazing

amount of it ourselves. Shop is always somewhat difficult to understand, unless one is conversant with the technical terms. What for instance would the names *whiff* or *funny* convey to the uninitiated? Even less we should think than *niblick* or *stimey*, which to us personally convey nothing. We will therefore expound. A whiff is the least safe sort of single-scutting-boat which the public can commonly obtain for its diversion, and it is morally certain that the inexperienced oar will upset himself in it. A funny is less safe still, and the public would scoff at the idea of going out in it at all, and most rightly. It is said that a penny balanced on the end of one outrigger will upset it, but we have not tried with a penny though we have upset it in other ways.

These terms will occur frequently in the conversation of the Able-bodied Seaman. He has always seen a freshman swimming or wading to the shore, for it is calculated that at least one freshman upsets his whiff on the lower river every day during full term. If it takes place in Barnwell Pool so much the merrier for the spectators, as all who know that fine expanse of what ought to be water will agree. These matters are by the way, and the Able-bodied Seaman does not really begin to talk till he gets to the Eights. Then you shall hear many strange expressions. This crew has no beginning; that crew does not keep it long, the other crew rolls all over the river; so-and-so gets his hands away but does not mark the finish; so-and-so holds it out but is slow with his hands; in their course to-day Emmanuel were a bit ragged round Grassy; Magdalene were all to pieces at the Willows; First were well together up the Long Reach.

Occasionally you shall hear speculations as to when Third are going to get out, and whether Downing will be able to put on, but these last are purely local hilarity. Then of course there is always the discussion of the unhappy individual who got in the way of the University Eight sculling himself in a tub. He will, you will be told, only be fined one guinea, because, fortunately for him, the boat did not have to stop. Had that happened he would have had to present the University Boat Club with a donation of five guineas without receiving either honour or gratitude. It is the worst offence of all to cause the University boat to pause in its career.

But we cannot pursue our meditations any further. It would take a volume to record the shop talked by the Able-bodied Seaman in an evening, and two more volumes to explain it. We will leave it therefore, lest worse should befall. As to rowing itself, we do not think we have succeeded in giving any information of value, though, when we were criticising the Lady-Novelist and the Ancient Mariner, we certainly intended to do so. We find, however, like most critics, that the thing is not to be done,—we will be honest enough to add, at any rate by us. If any one is curious about the art we must repeat our former contention that knowledge of it is not to be acquired at second-hand, and advise him to try it in his own proper person. Perhaps then he will find out wherein consists that nameless fascination of the oar, which our poor pen cannot attempt to describe or explain, but which exists and must ever exist for all who have known what it is to swing, eight men together, out against the wind.

NUMBER FIVE.

KING DROUGHT.

My road is fenced with the bleached white bones,
 And strewn with the blind white sand,
 Beside me a suffering dumb world moans
 On the breast of a lonely land.

On the rim of the world the lightnings play,
 The heat-waves quiver and dance,
 And the breath of the wind is a sword to slay,
 And the sunbeams each a lance.

I have withered the grass where my hot hoofs tread
 I have whitened the sapless trees,
 I have driven the faint-heart rains ahead,
 To hide in their soft green seas :

I have bound the plains with an iron band,
 I have stricken the slow streams dumb.
 To the charge of my vanguards who shall stand ?
 Who stay when my cohorts come ?

The dust-storms follow and wrap me round,
 The hot winds ride as a guard ;
 Before me the fret of the swamps is bound,
 And the way of the wild-fowl barred.

I drop the whips on the loose-flanked steers,
 I burn their necks with the bow ;
 And the greenhide rips and the iron sears
 Where the staggering lean beasts go.

I lure the swagman out of the road
 To the gleam of a phantom lake ;
 I have laid him down, I have taken his load,
 And he sleeps till the dead men wake.

My hurrying hoofs in the night go by,
 And the great flocks bleat their fear,
 And follow the curve of the creeks burnt dry,
 And the plains scorched brown and sere.

The worn men start from their sleepless rest
 With faces haggard and drawn ;
 They cursed the red sun into the west,
 And they curse him out of the dawn.

They have carried my outposts out and out,
 But—blade of my sword for a sign !—
 I am the Master, the dread King Drought,
 And the great West Land is mine !

WILL H. OGILVIE.

THE CHINAMEN.

WHEN Henry Theobald, thrice mayor of Wexhampton, founded his almshouse in that town, it pleased him to confer a benefit on certain others beside the decayed burgesses for whom the hospital was primarily intended. Besides the chief magistracy, he had held the posts of churchwarden to St. Mary's and treasurer to the trustees of the Ilkwell Grammar School; and, wishing to be remembered in all three capacities, he inserted a clause in the foundation scheme of his charity, whereby the Governors of Theobald's Hospital were empowered to let rooms therein —“(1) to a clergyman officiating at the Church of St. Mary, (2) to a person in the employment of the Corporation of Wexhampton, (3) to a master in the Ilkwell Grammar School, in the event of there being apartments vacant, at a rent of — pounds per annum; provided always that such persons be of good moral character, and are, and do remain, unmarried during enjoyment of the chambers allotted to them.” Should anybody be so sceptical as to doubt this, let him apply to the Charity Commissioners for a copy of the deed, and he will, without fail, be satisfied.

Hence it befell that, a few years ago, the ground floor rooms of No. 2 Theobald's Hospital were tenanted by Mr. John Bindon Winn, assistant town-clerk of Wexhampton, while Mr. Gilbert Crowe, M.A., first classical master in the Ilkwell School, lived in the upper story at No. 8. And as this history will concern itself with the doings of both these gentlemen,

it is satisfactory to know from the first that they were persons of good moral character.

Of the two privileged tenants Crowe was the senior; and though on terms of the closest intimacy with his companion, he frequently expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of the governors in harbouring one who, as he affirmed, could not invariably be trusted. For Winn, quiet, orderly and industrious, had a weakness; he was a confirmed collector of china, and a collector, according to Crowe, would never scruple to purloin any article which the peculiar bent of his mind led him to value. Possibly the willow-pattern plates from which the Companions of the Hospital ate their dinner did not appeal to Winn's æsthetic taste; possibly he was less enthusiastic in pursuit of his hobby, or more honest in his methods of collecting, than Crowe gave him credit for; in any case, the assistant town-clerk remained a tenant for three years, and in all that time, Harold Milverton, the warden, or Custos, never had occasion to complain of having lost so much as the lid of a sauce-boat.

The first floor at No. 2 had long been occupied by Mr. James Staunton, a veteran of ninety years, thirty of which had been passed in the almshouse. Between him and Winn there was a firm friendship; mutual invitations to tea were frequently exchanged, many were the presents of choice snuff sent up-stairs by the lodger on the ground floor to the Senior Companion, and long were the stories to which he listened regarding

the past glories of Wexhampton when James Staunton was its brightest ornament. The grief was universal when the venerable man took to his bed and died therein, bequeathing a fine jar of the real Old Crumbledon Pink ware to him who had kept his snuff-box replenished.

Milverton, the Custos, duly notified the Governors of the vacancy that had thus occurred in the Hospital, but long before they had met to consult upon the appointment of a successor to Mr. Staunton, the two privileged tenants had fully discussed the matter. For it affected them deeply; a new curate was about to take up his duties at St. Mary's, and there was therefore a possibility of his coming among them. The election of some cross-grained old fogey might inconvenience Winn, but the advent of a curate, who must be called upon, would concern the schoolmaster as well.

"I devoutly hope that they will elect a Companion," said Crowe, as he sat in Winn's parlour. "You and I, with the Custos, are enough to uphold the gentility of Theobald's. I admit that the curate would make a fourth at whist, but we cannot count upon him as a player."

Winn filled his pipe from Mr. Staunton's jar, wherein he kept his tobacco. "I have a presentiment that the curate will be my neighbour," he said.

"Never mind your presentiments. There is a very good chance that old Sawyer will be elected, — he that had the little boot-shop in Church Lane. He has a wooden leg that will make the very deuce of a noise over your head, but I should prefer him to the parson."

"The Governors won't have him. He's drunk six days out of the seven."

"Yes, but he's very pious when sober; and three half-pints of beer a

day is all that he'll get here. As for the wooden leg, what does it matter to you? You don't have to correct my pupils' infamous hexameters."

"Don't try to persuade me that you do any work at home, except on Sundays, Crowe. I know better."

"That is a gross libel, and I am going away to refute it. Your neighbour won't trouble you for long, in either case. I clearly foresee that you will soon disqualify yourself for privilege, and I, in frock coat and new trousers, will offer you up as a victim at the horns of the altar, with the curate officiating thereat."

"You may talk as much nonsense about me as you please, since nobody will believe you for a moment. But should I ever prove your surmises correct, don't flatter yourself that you'll be best man, because you won't. It's much more likely that you'll be the bride's father."

Crowe, having no retort to make, betook himself to his quarters across the square, and Winn was left to guess how much of his most private secret was public property. Hitherto he had persuaded himself that he had behaved with great discretion, but now he gathered from Crowe's hint that his frequent visits to one particular house had not escaped notice.

Meanwhile events began to thicken. The curate arrived, and took lodgings in Southgate Street, much to the satisfaction of our two friends in the Hospital. Furthermore, that respectable burgess William Sawyer, having ruined his business and quarrelled with his family, made formal application for admission to the almshouse, and was duly cited to appear before the Governors. This he accordingly did; but in such a condition as gravely to scandalise that august body, whose members unanimously resolved that William's future career

should not develop itself under their auspices. Winn looked forward to an undisturbed tenancy of No. 2, though he might have known that his luck was too good to last.

One evening, as he was perusing the works of Kant (an occupation somewhat uncongenial, and only taken up at the desire of one who has not yet been introduced to the public notice), Milverton called upon him, and gave him tidings that filled his soul with dismay. The curate had visited the Hospital, had been delighted with its monastic seclusion, and had applied for privilege, which the Governors had granted at once.

"This is very annoying," said Winn, after Milverton had told his news. "I understood that he had settled himself in the town. And where do you think of quartering him?"

He knew perfectly well that Milverton had no choice in the matter, but if he were to have a neighbour after all, he would at least enjoy the luxury of a grievance as well.

"Why, if there were any other rooms vacant, I would consult you, of course, but there are none. So I must give him Staunton's chambers, unless you care to move up-stairs."

"Thank you, no. I suppose I must submit; but it's hard to have a parson thrust upon me at this time of day."

"Oh, come, it's not so bad as all that. I've met him, and he seemed a very good sort of fellow."

"Fortunately for him, I'm a very good sort of fellow too. What's his name?"

"Well, you *are* behind the times. Never heard his name, and all Wexhampton talking about him! Garrett, —Sydney Garrett. He's a Cambridge man, from Trinity, I think, and they say he's very strong in the pulpit."

"Then I hope he will confine his energies to their proper sphere, and

abstain from gymnastic exercises over my head. When will he move in?"

"Some time this week. I'm sending the painter round to-morrow to put up his name on the door. You needn't look so dismal; he's an improvement on Sawyer, at all events."

Winn was not so sure about that. For the sad truth must be told that he was no church-goer, and clergymen do not approve of such as he. Mr. Garrett would probably consider it his duty to attempt a reformation in that respect, and would certainly call upon him, unless Winn forestalled him by paying the visit himself, as indeed he knew that he ought to do. However, there was no help for it. The painter came, and *Rev. Sydney Garrett* in staring letters decorated the panels of the door that had long borne the name of James Staunton. On the heels of the painter came the town-carrier, with an immense load of crates and boxes, doubtless containing the theological library of the new tenant; and one day towards the end of the week, when the assistant town-clerk returned from his labours, he gathered from the sounds overhead that the curate had arrived in person. It was evident that he wore heavy boots, and Winn thought that he would have preferred Sawyer, wooden leg and all.

Few men excel in the art of paying calls, and Winn, shy by nature, had not acquired any skill in social etiquette by dint of practice. He knew that somehow or other he must visit Garrett, and the mere thought of the duty made him very dismal. At last a brilliant idea struck him; he would postpone the call, but he would go to church on Sunday and see what the curate looked like. A knowledge of his outward man would remove half the difficulty.

With this end in view, he gave Crowe to understand that he would

be unable to accompany him in a projected boating excursion which had been fixed for the Sunday. The schoolmaster scoffed at his excuses (which, in so far as they affected anxiety concerning his spiritual welfare, were very lame indeed), and alleged that a more worldly motive underlay Winn's intentions. "My dear fellow, of course I understand," he said; "her parents naturally disapprove of your bad habits. Go to church by all means; it won't be for the last time, I'll warrant."

Something of truth there may have been in this, but if there were, it by no means lessened Winn's determination. So on Sunday morning he brushed his hat with unusual care,—partly in honour of the day, partly for the reason that made a more famous bachelor brush his—and punctually at eleven o'clock entered St. Mary's.

It was with a fine sense of virtue that he walked up the aisle and took a seat that commanded a good view of desk and pulpit. Certain twinges of conscience he felt, when he tried in vain to remember the occasion of his last appearance within those sacred walls; but they vanished when he saw that he was not the only sinner who had returned to the fold. The regular members of the congregation were present in full force. There were the Companions, with Milverton in the front pew (the Custos looked not a little surprised when he recognised his friend); there was the Mayor, for whom Winn had a profound contempt, and the Mayoress, whom he held in the utmost dread; and further down the church was the Radcot family, with whom he intended to lunch that day, in defiance of anything that Crowe might say or think. In fact, all Wexhampton was there,—except the curate, and he, of course, was closeted in the vestry with the rector.

But when the well-known figure of the old clergyman appeared, unattended by any stranger, many of his flock were disappointed, and Winn felt peculiarly aggrieved. Was it for this that he had breakfasted an hour earlier than usual, and deprived himself of his morning pipe? But perhaps Mr. Garrett would preach the sermon. Nothing of the sort! So far indeed was the rector from surrendering the pulpit, that he regaled his hearers with his most ancient discourse, bidding them remember Lot's wife, a lady whom they all recollected perfectly well, and whose charms were decidedly on the wane. The Mayor went to sleep, as a silent protest, and Winn had a good mind to follow his example.

The church-going, therefore, was not successful; and yet it had its advantages, for it was certainly better to walk to the Radcots' house with the family, than to go thither alone. So away they went, Mrs. Radcot and her elder daughter preceding Winn and Peggy, while Paterfamilias brought up the rear with a friend, discussing, as they walked along, a question relating to the municipal drainage-system, instead of the morning sermon.

"And what brought you to church?" Peggy inquired of Winn. "I should have stopped at home, only I understood that Mr. Garrett was going to preach. But of course that would have made no difference to you."

"Really, I wonder why you think I must have some special reason for doing what everybody else does as a matter of course," said Winn. "The ancient Inquisitors would have put me to the question if I didn't go to church, but the modern ones cross-examine me if I do."

"Well, as you certainly haven't attended service for the last eight

weeks, I thought that you must have a particular reason for coming to-day."

"Is it really eight weeks? Well, as a matter of fact, you are right. I came because I wanted to see my new fellow-lodger."

"But you could have seen him at home."

"Hardly to such advantage as at church. And after all, I didn't see him, because he happens to be the curate."

"Why, has he rooms in the Hospital?"

"That is what I mean to imply. He lives at No. 2, immediately above me."

"That must be very nice for you."

"Well, I reserve my opinion on that point. Goodness knows, I am an accommodating person, but there are a few things which I must insist upon. He must not ask me to teach in the Sunday School—"

"No, I think he had better not," remarked Peggy.

"He must knock at the door before coming into my room, and on no account must he meddle with my china. If he observes these conditions, I dare say that we shall agree tolerably well."

"You will be very uncomfortable if you don't. And it would be so convenient to be on good terms with him, for if you wanted to give a party, you know, you could borrow his rooms for the occasion. Why, you two might get up a dance in the Hospital! What fun it would be!"

"Yes, there would be room for two couples,—one in his rooms and one in mine. And just by way of a change, the chaperones could sit out on the stairs."

"Oh, we could dance on the green, and dispense with the chaperones altogether. Mr. Milverton would certify that all was quite proper. You must suggest the scheme to Mr.

Garrett when you meet him," said Peggy, as they entered the house.

Now Wexhampton, despite its dignity as a county town, is not so big as to consider the arrival of a new curate a trifling matter. So that on Peggy announcing that Mr. Garrett had obtained the privilege of Theobald's, Winn came in for a chorus of congratulation, as though there were no doubt but that his neighbour would be agreeable to him.

"It is a pity that you could not see him this morning, Mr. Winn," said Mrs. Radcot, "but I understand that he really is going to take the service this afternoon. If you are so very anxious to meet him, you have only to go to church again."

Our friend hastened to intimate, as delicately as possible, that he thought that he had done all that was required of him in the morning, and, having come to a safe anchorage, did not care about venturing forth again so speedily. Indeed it was not usual for Winn to leave the Radcots' house very early in the afternoon. His position in the family circle was as yet undefined, but such as it was, it entitled him to a place at the supper-table whenever he lunched with his friends. And they made no special efforts to entertain him, for while Caroline was playing the piano to her father after supper, and as Mrs. Radcot, Peggy, and Winn were sitting in the garden, his hostess remembered that she had a letter to write, which he would perhaps be kind enough to post for her on his way home. So she left the young people together,—whether intentionally or not, who shall say? Write a letter she certainly did, for Winn took it away with him, when he returned to the Hospital after a very pleasant day, and found it quite safe in his pocket when he donned his coat next Sunday.

It was half-past ten before he reached the Hospital. He generally looked in at the Custos's house on Sunday night, and he knew that Milverton and Crowe were gossiping together in the parlour, for the shadow of the latter was thrown in bold relief against the window-blind. But on this occasion he did not feel drawn to their society; he wanted to have an hour to himself, in which to consider things in general and the present and prospective condition of his income in particular. A quiet pipe and a little serious thought do no man any harm, and are better suited to a Sabbath evening than the frivolous conversation of schoolmasters and Custodes.

Having lit his pipe, and placed the soda-water and its appurtenances within easy reach, he lay back in the armchair, and abandoned himself to meditation. After all, he was not such a bad fellow; his income was very tolerable, his prospects excellent, and there could be no doubt but that he was in love. Wherefore, then, should he wait for the town-clerk's shoes? That functionary would probably last for years yet, and in the meantime—

Oh, confound that curate! Invisible when wanted, he was painfully audible now that Winn desired to be undisturbed. How could any one arrange his plan of campaign in so delicate a matter as this, with a fellow tramping about overhead as though he were an entire regiment of dragoons, horses and all? The footsteps hurried to and fro, doors were banged with maddening frequency, and at short intervals sounds were heard as though the reverend gentleman were hurling his boots across the room. Probably he has lost his hymnbook, thought Winn, but he is making a great fuss about it. Slam! That was the door of his room; his tread sounded upon

the landing,—upon the staircase,—in the passage—and almost before Winn could realise the situation, the Reverend Sydney Garrett was knocking at his door!

Winn rose, and admitted his visitor. In spite of his heavy tread, the curate of his imagination had been a small, mild cleric of the type represented by Mr. Penley in *THE PRIVATE SECRETARY*, and he was fairly staggered on being confronted with an immense fellow, wearing a moustache that would have done credit to a life-guardsmen. The canonical waistcoat and collar contrasted strangely with an ancient cricketing jacket, and as he bore in his hand no work of devotion, but a pipe, his appearance might have shocked a bishop of any austerity.

"Mr. Winn, I think?" said he, in a very pleasant voice.

Winn admitted the truth of this conjecture.

"I beg your pardon for introducing myself in this way," the curate went on, "but could you oblige me with some tobacco?"

Now Winn had determined that his neighbour was in search of a hymnbook, an article, we grieve to say, that he did not possess; but tobacco he had, and his heart went out to a fellow-creature who wanted to smoke and had not the wherewithal to fill his pipe. The curate was immediately ensconced in the rocking-chair, a tumbler set before him, and Winn took down the tobacco-jar from the mantelpiece.

"It's shockingly ill-mannered of me, I know," said Garrett, "and at this time of night, too! But I had to go to supper with the rector, who doesn't smoke, and when I came home, I found that I hadn't a crumb of tobacco to bless myself with. Only a very little whiskey for me, please,—thanks, that will be plenty. And so, having smelt yours, I thought that

perhaps—I say! Where in the world did you get that lovely jar?"

There could be no doubt about it; this man was of the elect. For Mr. Staunton's jar was the pride of Winn's heart, and the gem of his collection, not to be touched by profane hands, such as those of Milverton and Crowe; but Garrett could appreciate it, and Winn handed it to him without a fear for its safety. "Oh, you take an interest in these things?" said he. "Yes, it's a bit of genuine Old Crumbledon Pink, and rather rare in its way. Pretty, isn't it?"

"Pretty! Why, it's superb!" exclaimed Garrett. "Who was the maker? What is its history, and where does it come from?"

"It bears John Harrow's mark, and he worked a bed of clay at Crumbledon,—a little place some twenty miles away—early in the nineteenth century. This pot is dated 1803. I had it from your predecessor, old James Staunton. But fill your pipe."

Garrett did so, and restored the jar to the mantelpiece. "You're a bold man to expose such a treasure," said he; "if it were mine, I should keep it locked up behind glass."

Winn smiled the smile of superiority. "I'm not much given to breaking my china, and nobody else in Theobald's dare touch it for his life. And taking us all round, we are indifferent honest here, so I don't fear thieves."

"May I have a look at the rest of your pots?" asked the curate. "You seem to have something like a collection."

"A poor thing, but mine own. But I have one or two pieces besides the jar that I flatter myself you won't match very easily." And Winn unlocked his heart and his cabinets to Garrett there and then. Subsequently a move was made to the first floor, where both collectors found a con-

genial task in unpacking the crates containing the curate's trophies,—those very crates which Winn had supposed to be filled with volumes of ecclesiastic lore. It was broad daylight before the senior tenant of No. 2 sought his couch, vowing, as he did so, that he would renounce his evil courses, and become a habitual church-goer. A parson of such taste and discernment could not but be a bright example.

Thus it was that Garrett made a conquest of Winn. But Crowe was not to be won over so easily, and it cost the genial Custos some pains to bring about a meeting between the senior and junior privileged tenants. At last, however, by the exercise of much tact and some small deceit, the schoolmaster was lured into meeting the curate at a little dinner-party given by Milverton in his quarters. It was a solemn feast enough, until it was fortunately discovered that Garrett, among other accomplishments, could sing nigger songs to the banjo. Crowe was famed for his mastery over that instrument, and the curate's performance on it went as far with him as his china-mania had gone with Winn. In fact, the two made a musical evening of it, taking turn about with the banjo, while the Custos and Winn applauded impartially; and when at the close of the entertainment the two songsters, who had never exchanged a word before that night, insisted upon waking the echoes (and it is to be feared the Companions as well) with *Auld Lang Syne*, Milverton was so much elated with the success of his scheme, that he permitted this outrage upon the propriety of Theobald's Hospital to go unchecked.

A week or so after this harmonious gathering had taken place, as Winn was strolling homeward from his duties, which seldom occupied him

later than four o'clock in the afternoon, he met the younger Miss Radcot in High Street, and naturally went out of his way to accompany her. It happened that they had not seen one another since the eventful Sunday of which mention has been made, and Peggy turned the conversation to the topic which had been discussed on that occasion.

"And how do you agree with your neighbour?" she inquired. "Does he make you repeat your catechism?"

"No, never. We agree perfectly, for all his tastes are those of an old bachelor, except one, popularly considered old-maidish, and that I share with him. So we are admirably suited to one another."

"Oh, yes, I know he's a regular chinaman. He fell in love with mamma's Dresden inkpot the very first time he called on us, and I think he would have stolen it, if she had not kept her eye upon him."

"Then he has been to call on you already?"

"Why *already*? Hasn't he been here for three weeks or more? He has called twice, once in his official capacity, and again after dining with us. Some people don't neglect the proprieties so much as others."

"Nobody can accuse me of neglecting them so far as your family is concerned, can they? I had hoped for the pleasure of introducing Garrett to you myself."

"He had no need of an introduction. Clergymen are bound to visit their parishioners for the good of their souls. Well, I like Mr. Garrett, and so do we all." So, too, did Winn, but for some reason not so cordially as he had done before Peggy spoke. "I suppose you have just left the town-hall?" she went on.

"Yes, I was going home to tea,—or rather, I was intending to get

some tea at Milverton's. My housekeeper is out for the day, so I shall make a descent upon the Custos."

"Won't you descend upon us instead, now that you are so near us? And Mr. Milverton ought not to be led into idling his time away with you."

"I shall be delighted to come to tea, but I don't know why you accuse me of idling. Am I not at this very moment working for my London M.A., and at your instigation too?"

"I don't know what you mean by my instigation, but you certainly are not working at this very moment. And I don't believe that you ever open a book after you get home, either."

"What an incredulous person you are! But why should I bother about London M.A.s? I have an Oxford one already, and much study is a weariness to the flesh."

"You ought to mortify the flesh. I hate to see people growing lazy. But of course you needn't go in for the examination unless you like."

"I assure you that I have never liked to go in for an examination, nor do I like doing so now. It is only because other people desire it, that I am to be a candidate once again."

"Oh, I don't care a bit about it."

"Then perhaps I had better withdraw my name, for if you don't care, I'm sure nobody else does."

It was rather unfair of Winn to say this, for by so doing he deprived Peggy of her sex's unquestioned right to the last word. Did she encourage him to tread the paths of learning, she would contradict her own assertion that she cared nothing for his success; and were she to re-affirm her indifference, he might really believe that she meant what she said, which would be unfortunate. So she maintained a rather chilly silence, until they arrived at her home.

As Winn entered the hall, he observed a clerical wide-awake upon the hat-stand, and up-stairs he found the owner thereof. The Reverend Sydney Garrett was taking tea with Mrs. and Miss Radcot, and Winn considered that he should have brought his hat into the room with him. Peggy shook hands with ostentatious friendliness, and the two gentlemen greeted each other with a nod that did not imply intense delight at the meeting.

"Mr. Garrett has been singing the praises of the Hospital, Mr. Winn," said the lady of the house, as she handed him his teacup, "he is quite as enthusiastic as you were, when you came to Wexhampton."

"Ah," said Winn, "and perhaps when he has lived at Theobald's as long as I have, his enthusiasm will have grown as cool as mine." This was not a very pretty speech, nor did it truthfully describe Winn's sentiments; but our friend was in a gloomy vein at the moment.

"You don't mean to say that you are tired of the Hospital?" exclaimed Caroline in genuine surprise.

"I think we have known Mr. Winn long enough to be able to tell when he is speaking in fun, Carol."

"Well, if he is, I don't think he's very amusing, mamma," said Peggy. "Why, what is to become of our tea-party, if he gives up his privilege?"

"What tea-party, Peggy?"

"Why the one that he is going to give in No. 2. Didn't we arrange it all?" said she, turning to Winn for corroboration. "We are going to play tennis on the green, or dance upon it, if Mr. Milverton will lend us his piano. I dare say he will, if we ask him very prettily."

"What a delightful plan," said Garrett, "only I hope that I may be allowed to place my rooms at your disposal."

"Oh, of course that's all part of the scheme," she replied, not a little to Winn's disgust. The curate needed snubbing rather than encouragement.

"But you will have to get the Governors' permission before you turn the green into a tennis-lawn," said Mrs. Radcot.

"Oh, Papa will talk to the Chairman, and Mr. Winn will settle with Mr. Milverton," said Caroline, who evidently sympathised with her sister; "we shouldn't do the grass any harm."

"I hope we shall be able to arrange it," said Garrett (as though it were his tea-party, indeed!). "I am sure I can see no reasonable objection to the scheme."

Winn, meantime, held his peace, and suffered Garrett to talk as he pleased. He was well aware that the Governors would as soon sanction a game of Rugby football on their green as permit it to be marked out into tennis-courts; and even in her wildest flights of fancy Peggy must have known that dancing was wholly out of the question within the precincts of Theobald's Hospital. But there was nothing impracticable in the idea of a modest tea-party, which he could have carried out to his entire satisfaction, if only Garrett had refrained from meddling. For a clergyman the fellow was singularly wanting in tact.

Perhaps Peggy had been unjust when she affirmed her belief that Winn never opened a book in preparation for his forthcoming trial; but on this particular evening his conduct might have given her some grounds for complaint. Crowe was a classical scholar, of the first rank, it is true, but a classical scholar only, so that he could not possibly have assisted Winn to unravel any problem of psychology or ethics. Yet it is a fact that as soon as he had dined,

Winn betook himself to Crowe's rooms, where Milverton soon joined him. Possibly the rumour that the schoolmaster was newly possessed of a box of peculiarly excellent cigars may have accounted for the coincidence of their visits.

Crowe was hard at work in his shirt-sleeves correcting Greek verses, but he laid aside the blue pencil and produced the cigar-box. As a matter of fact, its contents proved to be peculiarly abominable; Winn dropped his cabbage-stalk out of the window, lest a worse thing should befall him, and the Custos, after a more prolonged trial, sank upon the sofa, and begged his host to summon Garrett with all speed, that he might receive ghostly comfort before dissolution.

"You must go unabsolved," said Winn, "for Garrett is on duty to-night, paying pastoral visits."

"Ah yes," said Crowe, "he's quite the faithful shepherd, is Garrett. More especially so, when the ewe-lambs need his care."

"Gossiping again, Crowe?" said Milverton, who, like many another censor, was not above taking an interest in the very weaknesses that he reproved. "What's your latest story?"

"Oh, nothing worth mentioning. Besides, it's no sin for a man to labour in his vocation, and Garrett is paid cash for paying visits. I wish I could earn my daily bread on such easy terms. However, I have heard it whispered that he has turned his attention rather particularly to one household."

"Be more explicit, you confounded old scandal-monger."

"I never mention names. Perhaps the household in question is subject to some evil influence,—such as Winn there might exert—and the *padre* is bent upon counteracting it. That's possible, you know."

"I don't know why you drag me into the matter," said Winn; "and as for evil influence, my character is better than yours, any day of the week."

"Well, of course Garrett may have some worldly motive for his visits. And on the whole, I venture to prophesy that although he was the last of us to come, he will be the first to go."

"You have said the same of Winn a hundred times," replied Milverton, "and if I were to set up as a prophet (which God forbid!) I should say that both he and Garrett will be privileged tenants long after you are married and done for."

"I don't wish to disparage Winn, who is a man of great and undoubted attractions; but I fear that his popularity has waned since the curate took the field. *Arma cedunt togæ*,—which, being interpreted, means that a barrister's wig stands a poor chance against a parson's surplice."

This conversation was displeasing to Winn, and he spoke the words of reproof. "There is no more contemptible creature in the world than the male gossip," he said. "With what old woman did you have tea to-day, Crowe?"

"Without descending to a *tu quoque*, I reply,—with none. I've been playing for the school against the town."

"Yes, and you ran your captain out in the first innings, and were bowled first ball in the second," remarked the Custos.

"Moreover, your cigars are villainous," said Winn. "I wonder where you expect to go to, when you die."

As he was unable or unwilling to give a satisfactory answer to Winn's question, Crowe pursued the subject no further, and his guests departed without learning anything more

definite with regard to Garrett's visits. But he had said enough for Winn, whose soul was disquieted within him. The schoolmaster had always been given to romancing; and even if he had not been drawing upon his very fertile imagination, he probably had only retailed some of the gossip that is to be picked up for the trouble of stooping in such a town as Wexhampton. Yet it could not be denied that Garrett had been to the Radcots' three times in as many weeks, and had further expressed himself as eager to entertain the ladies of the family at No. 2. In short, Winn was harbouring jealousy against him, and that evil passion was not decreased at his next meeting with the curate, who called on him a few days later, to show him a little Wedgwood pot that he had bought of the pawnbroker in Borough Lane. It was really a very superior little pot, but Winn showed no great enthusiasm about it.

"By the way," said Garrett, "have you heard that Mrs. Radcot is down with the flu? We shall have to postpone our little party, I'm afraid."

"Indeed? I'm sorry to hear it. But I had not intended to have the party until after my return from London."

"Why, are you going up to town?"

"Yes, I'm sitting for my London M.A. I'm off the day after to-morrow."

"I wish you luck,—even though you don't appreciate Wedgwood. We'll celebrate your success with the tea-party. I say,—have you known the Radcots long?"

"I knew Mr. Radcot slightly before I came here. In fact, he helped me to get my berth."

"Ah, if I had known him before, perhaps I should have been a bishop by this time. Well, I won't interfere with your reading. Good-night."

"Good-night," grunted Winn, and resumed his studies, though it is to be feared that he did not acquire much philosophy of a practical nature thereby.

A change of air is often prescribed by medical men for patients suffering under mental, as well as bodily complaints; and it was perhaps as well that Winn had to betake himself to the metropolis at this juncture. And as the results of his efforts after academic fame will have no further bearing on the present history, it may here be briefly recorded that he was most dismally plucked; so that if the prospect of distinction had been the sole object of his journey, he might just as well have stayed at home. But he had not set foot on a London pavement for more than a year, and great was the jubilation among the companions of his youth at his reappearance. There was Jack Amberley, now established as a doctor in Bloomsbury, and with him was Ray, the man of no occupation, and Wilbury the journalist, none of whom ever thought of going to bed before one o'clock, and who only required Winn's presence as an excuse for prolonging their revels till day-break; and there was Hamilton of the British Museum, who understood china better than any other man in Europe; and little Hunter, who had a wonderful acquaintance with all manner of queer foreign restaurants in Soho and its neighbourhood, where a man may dine like a lord for one and sixpence, wine and waiter's tip included. In short, Winn enjoyed himself immensely, when once his papers had been disposed of, and had the further satisfaction of knowing that he was fulfilling the behests of his lady; or so at least he persuaded himself, but perhaps she would have desired his earlier return to Wexhampton. And indeed, after

three weeks of merry-making, our friend began to tire of gaiety. After all, he was a quiet man by nature, and there was no place like Theobald's for peace and quiet; dinners at Roche's and the Café des Gourmets were luxurious, no doubt, but he was one who at all times preferred comfort to luxury; Hamilton's china was not nearly so interesting as his own, while, to sum up the whole, Wexhampton could afford one attraction that all London had not to offer. It was a perfect age since he had seen Peggy, and he took the train at Paddington in higher spirits than gentlemen returning from a holiday are wont to do.

And so the wanderer returned to his home. The town was fast asleep in the five o'clock sunshine of a summer afternoon, as he walked through the streets of Wexhampton. The Hospital Square was silent as the grave, and deserted save for a couple of Companions who were dozing in the shade of the founder's statue. Winn entered his room, shut the door behind him, and dropped into a chair with a sigh of satisfaction.

O dulce domum! How good it was to be home again! There stood the bookcase with its ordered ranks of old friends ranged lovingly side by side; there was the dear old wicker chair, and the desk whereat he had written the brilliant novel which indiscriminating publishers had one and all declined; there stood the china cabinets, faithfully guarding the treasures within; and there on the mantelpiece, most cherished of all his possessions, was—

No! It was not! He could not believe his eyes, and rubbed them desperately, sending his glasses flying across the room as a consequence. But had they remained on his nose, and had they been of the highest

power ever supplied by Messrs. Curry and Paxton, they could not have helped their wearer to see what was certainly not in its place. The Old Crumbledon Pink—the pot of pots—the priceless, unique tobacco-jar, was gone, had vanished utterly and completely! Winn's universe was shattered about him, and he cursed the day that saw him leave Wexhampton. Here was a pretty home-coming!

Mrs. Dick, kindest of housekeepers, had marked the return of her charge, and hastened to bring him the refreshment of a cup of tea. A habitual respect for her prevented Winn from making the direct accusation that rose to his lips, but the purport of his questions was not to be concealed, and Mrs. Dick refuted the charge of having broken the jar with virtuous indignation. The pink one that stood on the mantelpiece? Well, to be sure, and it wasn't there, neither, but she hoped that she knew Mr. Winn better than to meddle with any of his chinaware at this time of day. When had she last seen it? On Tuesday, when she swept the room, but she wouldn't say for certain. Had any one been in the room during his absence? Not as she knew of. The Custos had called once, to know when Mr. Winn would return, but he never so much as opened the door, but after speaking to her, went up-stairs to see Mr. Garrett. Finally and to conclude, Mr. Winn had better drink his tea before it grew cold.

The accused was dismissed, without a stain on her character, and Winn sipped his tea, pondering deeply the while. At last he arose, and with cautious tread went up to Garrett's apartments. Now was it likely that a clerk in holy orders would fall so low as to steal a tobacco-jar? A fig for clerks, and holy orders too!

Garrett was a collector first, and a curate afterwards. Winn knew the breed.

The room was empty, and Winn, with a shamelessness that surprised himself, began a thorough search among Garrett's properties. Though his investigations were fruitless so far as they concerned the Old Crumbledon Pink, they were not uninstrusive in themselves, and afforded him more knowledge of his neighbour's habits, both professional and private, than he could have obtained otherwise. Thus, he discovered a packet of old sermons, labelled *Stale—to be given again in the winter, mutatis mutandis*—a find which shook his faith in Garrett's industry not a little. Also, it was evident that the curate was a man of untidy habits, for articles of wearing apparel were scattered promiscuously about his bedroom, and the contents of his chest of drawers were in sad disorder. And pray what had Winn to do with the chest of drawers? He was looking for his tobacco-jar, which might have been concealed among Garrett's shirts.

He did not find it; but he found something else that did not allay his suspicions. He had returned to the sitting-room, and as he groped among the papers that heaped the window-seat, he found a little pile of tobacco beneath a religious magazine. There might have been some two ounces; it was very dry, and on closer examination, Winn perceived that if it was not his favourite Laughing Girl mixture, it was most uncommonly like it. There was about that quantity left in the jar when he had gone up to London.

Now this looked bad; and Winn was rapidly building up a case against the curate à la Sherlock Holmes, when he heard a well-known step in the passage below. Flight was out of the question, so he instantly feigned

to be in search of something,—not the jar—which might serve as an excuse for his uninvited presence. Garrett swung the door open, and then, seeing his friend in the room, came to a dead pause.

"Hullo! So you're back again?" said the curate.

"Yes, I came home about an hour ago."

"Are you looking for anything?"

That was precisely the case. "Only for the Wexhampton paper," said Winn.

"I'm afraid I don't take it in. Sit down; I'm just going to have some tea."

"Thanks, I've just had mine. I say, Garrett, it's a very queer thing, but I can't find my tobacco-jar."

"What, the Crumbledon Pink? You don't mean to say that you've lost it?"

"No, I've not lost it, but somebody else has lost it for me. You can't throw any light on the matter, I suppose?"

The curate screwed up his mouth as though he were going to whistle, paused, and then shook his head. "Let's see," he said, "it's Monday to-day,—the jar was all right on Wednesday, for Mrs. Radcot and her daughters came to tea with me, and I took them into your room on purpose to show it to them. I haven't seen it since."

Once more the boding voice of Crowe rang in Winn's ear, and his anger was stirred against Garrett for that he had taken unfair advantage of his absence. The curate had made the tea-party his own; surely he was capable of appropriating the jar as well.

"Smoke?" said Garrett, offering his pouch.

Winn did not permit the chance to escape him. "Pioneer? No thanks; do you mind me trying that stuff on

the window-seat? It looks more to my taste."

"But my dear man, it's been lying there for weeks, and isn't fit to smoke."

Winn didn't care about that, and filled his pipe. There was no mistake. "Why, this is Laughing Girl," he said.

"Yes, I've been giving it a trial. I don't take to it particularly."

"You shouldn't let it get so dry. Keep it in a pot, as I do,—or as I did, for I shall not have the heart to use a jar again."

"Oh, I expect the Pink will turn up in time. Things will disappear now and then, you know."

With this poor consolation Winn had to content himself, for he dared pump the curate no further. Garrett could not fail to have grasped the true explanation of his presence, as soon as he had blurted out the news of his loss. And so he changed the subject, inquiring, not without some difficulty, as to the tea-party which was to have been his. He learned that Mrs. Radcot was quite herself again, and that Caroline had regretted his absence from the scene of the festivity, — which was very kind of her, no doubt, but regret from that quarter did not greatly affect him.

"And you showed them my rooms, too?" he said.

"Your rooms? No, I didn't. Why should I?"

"But you told me just now that you took the girls to see my jar," Winn insisted, hot upon the scent again. For why did Garrett contradict himself? And how came he by that tobacco,—he, who smoked Pioneer, and Pioneer only? Winn did not believe that his friend had ever experimented with the Laughing Girl mixture, since that first occasion when necessity had driven him to fill his pipe with it.

However, Garrett looked perfectly innocent. "Oh yes, I remember. We just went inside for a couple of minutes, but no harm came to the pot then, at all events. And by the way, Miss Peggy asked after you, and said that she hoped you would pass this time."

Her message was more to Winn's taste than that of her sister had been, but it was not exactly soothing. There was surely no occasion for Peggy to have alluded to past failures. A painful silence ensued, and Winn was just about to withdraw, when Milverton appeared, considerably to the relief of both parties. "Back again from the torture-chamber?" quoth the Custos. "Well, Winn, how did it go? First-class and gold medal, or stupendous plough?"

"I don't know, and I don't care a toss. I've lost my tobacco-jar."

"Queer thing, very," said Garrett.

"Not at all, with a rival collector up-stairs," said the irreverent Milverton.

"Oh, come, Winn's perfectly welcome to search my rooms if he suspects me," said the curate, with just the faintest note of sarcasm in his voice. Winn found occasion to use his handkerchief.

"Let's see—wasn't it a blue one with handles?" said Milverton, kindly anxious to sympathise with the bereaved one. But the question was unfortunate.

"Good heavens! And you must have seen it twice a week at least for the last month! It was pink, man, pink!"

"Was it, though? I really thought it was blue,—or green. Well, it'll turn up, no doubt. I want you fellows to dine with me to-night. Crowe's coming."

"I'm sorry. I dine early with the rector, and I've got to take an evening service at half-past seven."

"Well, look in on your way back. You'll come, Winn?"

"Thanks; but I can't promise to be very good company in my present frame of mind."

"Oh, we'll cheer you up. Crowe will give you one of his excellent cigars, and you'll forget all your other troubles at once. You'd better come across with me now, or Garrett will be late for the rector's feed."

Perhaps Milverton had never presided over a more gloomy entertainment than that to which he had invited Winn. The collector's thoughts were dwelling on his loss, and when they were expressed verbally, were not such as tended to enlivenment. Crowe, too, was saturnine beyond custom; Harris *major* had failed to obtain the Exeter Scholarship, for which the schoolmaster had coached him long and carefully, and the disappointment which he had generously concealed from his pupil was fully displayed in the presence of his companions. He had no sympathy with Winn's misfortune, for he met that gentleman's first allusion to his tobacco-jar with the curt remark, "Didn't know you had one," feigning an ignorance highly exasperating; and even the Custos looked a trifle bored when the subject was introduced for the third time. As for Garrett, he never appeared at all, and the party must be set down as one of Milverton's few failures in the social line.

The days went by, and nothing was seen or heard of the Old Crumbledon Pink. But for the help and sympathy extended to him by Garrett, Winn might have fretted himself into a brain-fever, so entirely was he unmanned by its disappearance. All possible places of concealment were ransacked, and between them, the two chinamaniacs turned the whole house upside down, in-

curring the high displeasure of Mrs. Dick by insisting on an investigation of her pantry. It was in vain; by Saturday evening Winn had lost all hope of ever recovering his treasure, and it behoved those who valued their safety to give him a wide berth.

Sunday came,—as fine a Sunday as ever drew a loiterer to church—but at ten o'clock Winn was sitting over his breakfast with a frown on his face and black misery in his heart. Not even the prospect of lunching with the Radcots gave him any consolation, whence it may be inferred that he was in a truly parlous state. There was a knock at the door, and Garrett, in full Sabbath trim, made his appearance.

"Is this a time to be eating sausages?" said he. "Aren't you coming to church?"

"No, I'm not," snarled Winn, "and I wonder that you ask me. How dare I, when I have not forgiven the miscreant who has robbed me?"

"Oh, nonsense, nobody has robbed you," said the curate, with some asperity. "I expect that you mislaid the pot before you went to town."

This was not to be endured. "Do I look like a born fool? Where the deuce could I mislay it? You know as well as I do that we have searched the very dust-bins. Oh, if ever I find the scoundrel, I'll do him to death by slow tortures. Last night I dreamed that I impaled him on the town-hall railings. I wish the dream would come true."

"If that's your state of mind, you certainly do well to stay at home," said the pious man, and went his way. The bells began to ring; the Companions gathered in the hall, and presently filed out in pairs like the animals leaving the Ark, Milverton, equipped with bible, prayerbook, hymnbook too, heading the proces-

sion. But Winn remained behind, savage of soul, and unforgiving of spirit.

As he was prowling round his room, looking through his cabinets for the hundredth time, he was roused by a voice that hailed him through the open window. "Hullo," it said, "still on the pot-hunt, I see?"

He turned, and beheld Crowe, a godless figure in flannels and an old straw hat. The schoolmaster entered, and sat down on the table. Having smoked in silence for a short time, he thus began: "It's no good worrying, my dear fellow, you'll never see it again. I thought the *padre* had sneaked it at first, but he couldn't possibly have gone on living with you, if he had not had a clear conscience. No, it's the old story; *cherchez la femme*."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, that Mrs. Dick has pawned your property in order to indulge a craving for strong waters. There never was a laundress or bedmaker yet that wouldn't drink a pie-dish, let alone a tobacco-jar."

"You don't know Mrs. Dick. I'd as soon suspect—"

"Well, you know, you needn't mention names. I understand whom you mean without them."

"Look here," said Winn; "I'm in a very bad temper to-day, and if you are going to behave like an ass, I wish you'd go and bray on the green."

"Why, now I come to look at you, you are a trifle off colour. Never mind, I've got some old jam-pots at home, and you shall have one, if you're good. Come to lunch and take your pick." And the tormentor withdrew, having performed the part of Job's comforter to admiration.

But it was now twelve o'clock, and high time for Winn to go townward. As he laced his boots, a dim perception entered his head that the truly

wise man has ever two strings to his bow, and on approaching the Radcots' house he grew comparatively resigned to his fate. Never again would he see the Old Crumbledon Pink, but he was young, and life might still have something in store for him. Peggy remained; and as he waited for admission on the doorstep of her abode, he actually thought more of her than of the jar. Was Mrs. Radcot at home? No, the family were all at church, except Miss Peggy, and she was upstairs in the drawing-room. So upstairs went her lover, and no Peggy could he see.

Momentarily disappointed, he glanced round the room, and then, heedless of the chair and the Persian cat that he upset in his progress, dashed across to a little table that stood in the bay-window. For there—there in the Radcots' drawing-room—filled with a great bunch of roses, red, white and yellow—was the long lost treasure! Yes, there it was, the Old Crumbledon Pink, whole, round and sound, quite at home in its strange surroundings, as though it had never served a higher purpose than that of a flower-vase since it was first moulded. He caught it up in an ecstasy of joy, and was literally hugging it to his heart, when Peggy came into the room.

Let others blame him; but you, sir, who recently found your ancestral seal-ring in the nursery toy-box, and I, who rescued my Pickering Horace from the limbo of outcast school-books to which it had been consigned by irreverent hands, will find an excuse for Winn's conduct at this juncture. A month had passed since he had seen the lady of his heart, and she had occupied his thoughts continuously until he had been deprived of his tobacco-jar; and yet, now that she stood before him, prettier and sweeter than ever, he stood stock

still, embracing his trove, and his only greeting was: "Wherever did you get this from?"

Peggy became very stiff and proud. "You are really too polite. Mamma is quite well, thank you, and will be glad to hear that you have inquired after her."

"I am utterly ashamed of myself," said Winn, with sincere penitence; "I am delighted to hear of Mrs. Radcot's recovery. But,—but I could not have foreseen that I should find this jar in your house."

"And may I ask why you hug it in that ridiculous way? We shall never be forgiven if you break it."

"I should never forgive myself. You see, I have been hunting high and low through Theobald's for it, and am naturally surprised to find it in your possession."

"Really? And is Mr. Garrett obliged to consult you, before lending his own property to his friends?"

Oh, Garrett, Garrett! *Pœna pede claudo*—this was showing the cloven hoof with a vengeance! "But my dear Peggy—!"

"I beg your pardon?" said she, with such hauteur as to make it clear that she resented the form of address. Had Winn behaved with more discretion at the beginning, perhaps he might have called her what he pleased. "But my dear Miss Peggy—"

"I beg your pardon?"

"But, Miss Radcot [she liked this even less, but she had to put up with it], the point is that it isn't Mr. Garrett's property at all, but mine!"

"What nonsense! Why, it was in his room when we went to tea with him the other day; and he lent it to Carol, because she said it would be such a lovely thing to paint. That's how it comes here, since you are so anxious to know."

The solution of the mystery should now have been clear to him, for there

is only one thing that can induce an honest and truthful cleric to steal and fib like a layman, and a shady one it is. But misled by jealousy and by that gossiping Crowe, Winn was still unable to find an excuse for Garrett's proceeding. "Well," he said, "of all the—the cool cheek! Look here," and he was going to turn it upside down, when Peggy stopped him. "Take care, silly," said she, in her turn verging upon the familiar; "you'll spoil the carpet! It's full of water."

"Well, then, look here," and he held the jar on high, so that she could see it underneath, where his initials were inscribed, "what's that?"

She peered up at it. "J. B. W.! Then it is yours, after all?"

"Of course it's mine. But what in the world was Garrett about, when he took it from my room, and lent it to your sister? He's been telling me the most awful fibs you can imagine, to conceal his guilt."

"Oh, the villain!" said Peggy, and began to laugh.

"But, Peggy, it's no laughing matter. Kleptomania is a very serious failing in a clergyman. Is the man mad?"

"More or less, I suppose. Can't you see for yourself, or do you want me to tell you why he lent it to Carol?"

And enlightenment suddenly descended upon Winn. He hesitated an instant, and then, "I think that I should like you to tell me, please," he said.

She looked a little alarmed at this proposal, for indeed it was intended to lead up to another. "Whatever was the reason, a curate should be above theft," said she, keeping her eyes fixed upon the carpet.

"Even curates are human," said Winn very sententiously, "and being human myself, I sympathise with him"

"What, although he stole your china?"

"Although he stole my china." He set the Old Pink upon the table again, and mustered up his courage. "I have a fellow feeling for him, because I believe that, saving my poor honesty, our positions are very similar. I haven't run away with any of his properties, but if I got the chance, I would steal the whole world, if it would do me any service with you, Peggy dear."

And what did Peggy say to that? Not very much, but her answer satisfied Winn completely, and if an earthquake had shattered the Old Crumbledon Pink to bits there and then, he would not have cared a pin, nor have given half a thought to its fragments. Much may happen in the roasting of an egg; for a week had Winn gone in quest of the jar, and for two years in pursuit of Peggy, and now, lo and behold, he had found both in the space of fifteen minutes! All that was necessary had been said; and all that was to be done in the circumstances took up very little time. Perhaps this was just as well, for the sound of voices in the hall announced the return of the church-goers. Peggy snatched her hand away from Winn, the door opened, and in they came, Mr. Radcot, Mrs. Radcot, Caroline,—and the Reverend Sydney Garrett.

There was something truly magnificent in the culprit's bravado. The stolen jar was in full view on the table, and the lawful owner stood beside it; the game was up, yet even at this last, the curate showed no sign of dismay or contrition. Indeed Winn looked the more confused of the two, for had the party come upon the scene one minute earlier, or had they ascended the stairs in silence, his situation would have been extremely embarrassing. Even as it

was, he fancied that papa and mamma were not without their suspicions.

However that may have been, it was now time for luncheon, when romance is out of place. The bell rang, and they went down-stairs to the dining-room, where Winn took his seat beside Peggy and Garrett his beside her sister. No reference had yet been made to the Old Pink, but from the set of his face it was evident that the curate was preparing for the fray, and after saying grace at his host's desire, he relapsed into silence. Winn, too, was rather chary of his words, and so was Peggy; Caroline, the innocent receiver of stolen goods, still ignorant of the morning's events, was the conversationalist of the party. But this state of things could not continue for long. With the appearance of gooseberry-tart came the inevitable explosion, and it was Mrs. Radcot who fired the mine.

"I hope you are in no hurry to recover your beautiful jar, Mr. Garrett," said she. "Carol finished her drawing yesterday, but we can scarcely bring ourselves to part with the original just yet."

Winn scowled across the table at the curate, who stared back at him with a brazen countenance. "If I might have the shadow, I would gladly leave the substance with you," he replied. "I am sure it could not be in safer keeping." And he favoured Winn with another stare; but for manners, he would have winked at him.

"It's something of an heirloom, I suppose, Garrett?" said Mr. Radcot, who imagined that he had a taste for china.

"Oh yes, it's been in the family for years," was the answer.

Our friend could contain himself no longer. "There's another little jar coming your way soon, isn't there,

Garrett?" he asked, with only seeming innocence. But he was sorry that he had broken silence, for he received a sharp blow on the shin, as it were from a pointed shoe, that hurt him very much, and warned him that he would do well to hold his tongue. Could it really have been Peggy who treated him so? Happily his utterance was taken literally by those who were not in the secret.

"Then Mr. Garrett must not lend it to me," said Mrs. Radcot, "or perhaps you would never see it, Mr. Winn."

"I should certainly suspect you of having it, Mrs. Radcot, since I have found this bit of Old Crumbledon in your possession. I was a little puzzled as to what had become of it, when I could not see it in his room."

"Ah, Winn, I suppose you wanted to steal it? What rogues you collectors are!" said Mr. Radcot, hitting the right nail on the wrong head. And Garrett winced for the first time.

These alarums and excursions went no further at the time, for lunch being over, the curate hastened away to his duties, probably regretting for once the promise that bound him to return for tea. And in his absence Winn also discharged his duty like a man, and Mr. Radcot had to forego his customary perusal of *THE SPECTATOR* to listen to the confession of his would-be son-in-law. The interview was short, and eminently satisfactory to the party most concerned. As for the scenes that ensued between Winn and the other members of the family, they may be omitted as not strictly pertaining to the present history.

At five o'clock Garrett returned. Apparently he had made up his mind to have it out with his friend, for he steadily pursued him all the evening with intent to find him by himself,

which he failed to do, as Peggy was somehow always in the way. He made his last attempt at ten o'clock, when he rose to go home. "Am I to have your company back to the Hospital?" he asked, when he had taken leave of the family.

Winn smiled upon him sweetly. "Well, I think not," he said. "I shall stay a little longer,—to post Mrs. Radcot's letters." And the curate departed.

An hour or so later, Winn followed him. It was a beautiful night, and he walked along with his head somewhere up among the stars, firmly convinced that they, together with the rest of the universe, had been made and created for the especial behoof of John Bindon Winn. So mightily was he uplifted that on arriving at Theobald's he failed to remark that a light was burning in his parlour, where no light should have been before he kindled it himself. He marched into his room as though he were a king opening parliament at the very least, and found himself in the presence of Garrett, who, seated in his favourite chair, and smoking a pipe with gloomy countenance, was patiently awaiting his arrival.

"Oh, here you are, are you?" said Winn, as he threw his hat on to the window-seat.

"Here I am, as you remark," replied the curate. Nothing could avert the explanations now, and they must necessarily come from both parties. Winn took a pipe from the mantelpiece, and from sheer habit stretched out his hand for the tobacco-jar. Garrett noticed the action, and as Winn turned a reproving glance upon him, their eyes met. The brazen stare that had decorated Garrett's features earlier in the day had disappeared and was replaced by an expression, half shame-faced, half

comic, that was much more becoming. "I have been waiting for you ever so long," he began; "it was very decent of you not to give me away before those people this afternoon."

"Considering that you offered to give my pot away before me, I am inclined to agree with you," said Winn, as he lit a match.

"I suppose you can guess how I came to make such a silly ass of myself?"

"I begin to have an idea."

"I was tidying up my room in preparation for my party, and I borrowed the Old Pink to heighten the effect. She did you the honour to admire it, so I asked her to take it away with her, if she cared to make a drawing of it. I didn't expect you home so soon. I suppose I ought to be sorry; but I'm afraid I'm not."

"H'm," said Winn, "you must be pretty far gone."

The curate looked at him rather queerly. "Sure you wouldn't have done the same?" he said.

"Why do you ask?"

"Well, because I've got eyes in my head, and for some time past I have suspected that the Radcots' house has an attraction for you as well as for me."

"Well, perhaps it has," Winn coyly admitted.

"I thought we were in the same boat," said Garrett. "Crowe put me on the scent."

"Crowe is a wicked gossip, and you mustn't believe half of what he tells you." But in spite of his words Winn could not conceal his triumph.

"You don't mean to say—?"

"I do indeed. We settled it

between us just before lunch to-day. Isn't it glorious?"

The thief rose up, and smote Winn cordially upon the back. "You are probably the happiest man alive," he said, "for you possess the most beautiful jar, and the most charming girl but one, in the whole world."

"No thanks to you though. There, never mind! Wouldn't you like to drink our healths?"

"Rather. No, you needn't make it weak to-night. *Prosit!*" And they clinked glasses.

"Now I know how you came by that tobacco I found in your room," said Winn.

"I fear you didn't confine your researches to my parlour alone. I noticed your tracks in the bedroom, you most suspicious of men. Don't be in such a hurry to think ill of your neighbours another time."

"And then they won't be found out?"

"Exactly so. I leave you to your glory. Good-night."

"One moment," said Winn. "As you said, we are in the same boat. Now just to show my sympathy with you, I shall be happy to lend you anything that my future sister-in-law might like to paint, provided that you give me notice. For instance, I have a remarkably fine old meerschaum pipe—"

The Reverend Sydney forgot his sacred character again. "Damn your old meerschaum pipe," he called out from over the banisters.

And to-day the privilege of Theobald's Hospital is upheld by Crowe alone.

ROBIN ROSCOE.

